TESTS: Suzuki's Light-Speed GS750ED, Yamaha TT600 Boomer
Pro-Tec TT600 Earthmover, Triple-Treat Honda ATC200X

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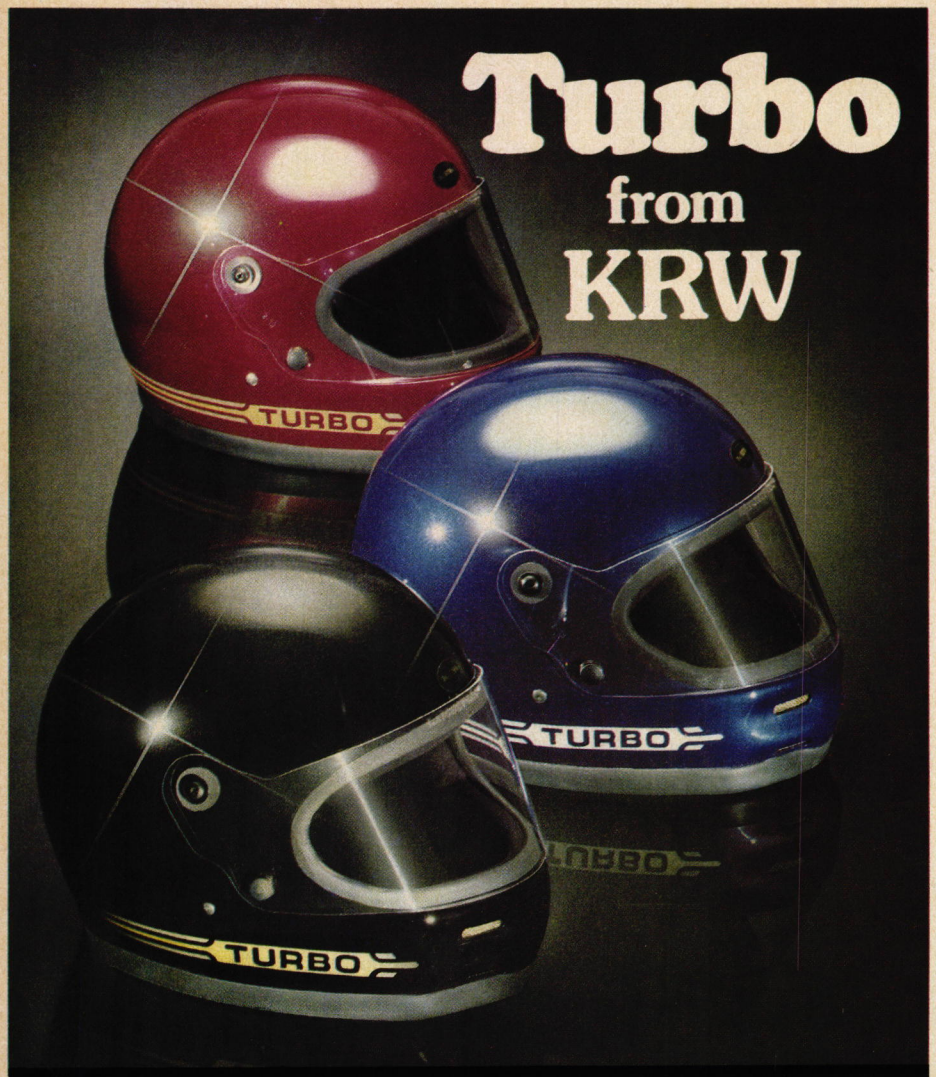
ON THE COVER:
Chris Eastman sneaks a shot of the world's largest trophy just before its presentation at CYCLE GUIDE'S Motorcycle of the Year award ceremony. Your invitation is on page 15.

QUOTE:
"We're talking superlatives here; check your qualifiers at the door. We don't serve their kind."

—Pg. 15



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Cycle Guide's catalog of recent test hardware—no brag, just fact

OFF-ROAD

MAKE & MODEL	ISSUE	TYPE	ENGINE TYPE	WHEEL TRAVEL, IN. FRONT/REAR	WEIGHT, LBS.	RAKE/TRAIL, DEGREES/INCHES	GEARS
Can-Am Sonic MX-'83	January '83	Motocross	Four-stroke	11.6/12.1	272	28.0/4.2	5
Can-Am 500MX-'83	May '83	Motocross	Two-stroke	11.6/12.0	250	28.0/4.2	5
Honda CR125R-'83	April '83	Motocross	Two-stroke	10.9/12.3	193	27.2/4.1	6
Honda CR250R-'83	February '83	Motocross	Two-stroke	11.5/12.2	217	26.8/4.0	5
Honda CR480R-'83	May '83	Motocross	Two-stroke	12.0/12.3	226	26.0/3.9	5
Honda XR350R-'83	June '83	Enduro	Four-stroke	10.9/10.4	253	26.0/3.9	6
Honda ATC200X-'83	August '83	ATV	Four-stroke	7.2/6.2	285	N/A	5
Husqvarna 250CR-'83	January '83	Motocross	Two-stroke	11.8/12.7	227	30.0/5.5	6
Husqvarna 430WR-'83	June '83	Enduro	Two-stroke	10.4/10.6	246	30.0/6.0	6
Husqvarna 500CR-'83	May '83	Motocross	Two-stroke	11.8/12.8	240	30.0/5.5	4
Kawasaki KDX200-'83	July '83	Enduro	Two-stroke	9.8/11.0	213	28.0/4.8	6
Kawasaki KX500-'83	May '83	Motocross	Two-stroke	11.7/11.9	232	29.0/4.8	5
KTM MC 495-'83	May '83	Motocross	Two-stroke	11.9/12.4	249	28.0/4.2	4
Maico 490 E-'83	December '82	Enduro	Two-stroke	11.9/12.6	261	27.5/4.6	5
Maico 490 Spider-'83	May '83	Motocross	Two-stroke	11.8/12.2	240	27.0/4.7	4
Suzuki ALT50-'83	June '83	ATV	Two-stroke	N/A	90	N/A	1
Suzuki DR250-'82	December '82	Trail	Four-stroke	9.7/10.3	259	28.2/4.6	5
Suzuki RM125-'82	November '82	Motocross	Two-stroke	11.2/12.6	197	29.5/4.8	6
Suzuki RM250-'83	February '83	Motocross	Two-stroke	10.7/12.4	219	29.7/4.8	5
Suzuki RM500-'83	May '83	Motocross	Two-stroke	11.9/12.8	234	29.7/4.8	4
Yamaha YZ250-'83	March '83	Motocross	Two-stroke	11.3/12.3	217	28.0/4.7	5
Yamaha YZ490-'83	May '83	Motocross	Two-stroke	11.8/12.5	227	28.5/4.7	4
Yamaha TT600K-'83	August '83	Trail	Four-stroke	11.7/10.8	280	28.0/4.6	5

STREET

MAKE & MODEL	ISSUE	ENGINE TYPE*	DISPLACEMENT, CC	QUARTER-MILE, SEC./MPH	TOP SPEED, MPH	WEIGHT, LBS.	FUEL CONSUMPTION, MPG	STOPPING DISTANCE FROM 60 MPH, FT.
BMW R65 LS-'82	April '82	2C/G	649.6	14.15/92.4	109	417	35–50	138
BMW R100RT-'82	May '82	2C/G	979.9	13.86/95.1	126	523	35–50	148
H-D FLH Classic-'82	August '82	45-deg. 2D/F	1338.6	15.47/82.0	101	752	32–42	180
H-D FXRS-'82	December '81	45-deg. 2D/F	1338.6	13.92/93.1	109	594	40–47	124
H-D XLS Roadster-'83	April '83	45-deg. 2D/F	997.6	13.84/93.9	106	515	43–55	138
H-D XLX-61-'83	June '83	45-deg. 2D/F	997.6	13.45/95.9	106	488	40–72	128
Honda CBX400F-'82	October '82	4A/F	399.1	13.59/96.5	110	402	34–58	128
Honda CB1100F-'83	January '83	4A/F	1062.2	11.22/119.8	144	550	33–46	135
Honda CX650 Custom-'83	May '83	80-deg. 2E/G	673.5	12.56/103.0	119	454	38–48	124
Honda CX650 Turbo-'83	March '83	80-deg. 2E/G	673.5	12.09/111.7	137	538	25–44	124
Honda FT500 Ascot-'82	August '82	1 B/F	497.7	14.92/83.7	97	360	47–54	146
Honda GL1100-'82	April '82	4C/G	1085.0	12.61/106.5	139	606	41–49	N/A
Honda GL1100A Aspencade-'83	February '83	4C/G	1085.0	13.51/96.0	152	752	32–46	131
Honda GL1100I Interstate-'82	April '82	4C/G	1085.0	13.30/99.5	139	697	40–50	N/A
Honda Nighthawk 550-'83	July '83	4A/G	572.3	12.46/102.9	114	429	37–49	125
Honda Nighthawk 650-'83	December '83	4A/G	656.0	12.28/108.0	122	451	28–51	127
Honda Nighthawk 750-'82	March '82	4A/F	748.7	12.74/103.8	131	543	36–49	128
Honda V45 Interceptor-'83	May '83	90-deg. 4D/F	748.1	11.96/111.7	138	511	31–40	116
Honda V45 Magna-'82	June '82	90-deg. 4D/G	748.1	12.34/105.9	129	507	30–46	124
Honda V45 Sabre-'82	June '82	90-deg. 4D/G	748.1	12.37/106.8	128	511	29–47	149
Honda VT750C Shadow-'83	April '83	45-deg. 2D/G	749.6	12.91/100.8	127	484	48–55	132
Kawasaki GPz550-'83	June '83	4A/F	553.8	12.65/102.9	132	438	42–62	144
Kawasaki GPz750-'83	February '83	4A/F	739.0	12.16/109.2	134	498	35–51	136
Kawasaki GPz750 Turbo-'83	July '83	4A/F	739.0	11.22/123.5	146	514	N/A	N/A
Kawasaki GPz1100-'82	May '82	4A/F	1089.9	11.33/119.4	137	534	35–48	127
Kawasaki KZ550 Spectre-'83	May '83	4A/G	553.8	13.35/96.8	116	441	44–56	137
Kawasaki KZ750-L3-'83	January '83	4A/F	739.0	12.09/108.6	134	487	47–53	132
Kawasaki KZ750 LTD-'82	December '82	4A/F	739.0	12.56/105.3	131	474	41–55	131
Kawasaki KZ1000R-'82	November '82	4A/F	998.6	11.85/116.7	134	505	35–49	129
Kawasaki KZ1100 Spectre-'82	March '82	4A/G	1089.9	11.96/110.4	142	553	30–44	132
Suzuki GS450E-'83	January '83	2A/F	448.2	14.24/93.2	106	384	39–49	131
Suzuki GS450G Automatic-'83	February '83	2A/G	448.2	16.41/82.3	94	410	36–59	143
Suzuki GS550E-'83	June '83	4A/F	572.3	12.59/104.0	120	443	39–47	135
Suzuki GS750E-'83	August '83	4A/F	747.4	11.89/112.9	131	485	35–50	135
Suzuki GS1000S Katana-'81	December '81	4A/F	997.5	11.40/118.7	141	525	33–51	129
Suzuki GS1100E-'82	May '82	4A/F	1074.9	11.20/119.3	141	530	37–49	132
Suzuki GS1100G-'82	September '82	4A/G	1074.9	11.92/114.2	137	555	42–48	138
Suzuki GS1100GK-'82	October '82	4A/G	1074.9	12.58/104.5	137	647	31–44	155
Suzuki XN85 Turbo-'83	March '83	4A/F	673.9	12.38/107.1	132	521	34–46	120
Yamaha XS400 Seca-'82	December '82	2A/F	399.4	14.58/89.2	110	382	47–57	140
Yamaha XJ650 Seca-'82	September '82	4A/G	653.4	12.83/103.3	125	469	44–59	135
Yamaha XJ650 Turbo-'83	March '83	4A/G	653.4	13.06/103.3	126	543	35–53	126
Yamaha XS400 Maxim-'82	November '82	2A/F	399.4	14.65/88.1	104	376	52–61	136
Yamaha 750 Virago-'82	January '82	75-deg. 2D/G	748.8	13.28/99.8	105	481	43–48	132
Yamaha 920 Virago-'83	April '83	75-deg. 2D/G	920.0	12.84/101.5	108	503	38–45	138
Yamaha XV920R-'82	February '82	75-deg. 2D/F	920.0	13.10/100.4	112	509	37–51	128

***A**-Transverse Vertical, **B**-Vertical (single-cylinder only), **C**-Horizontally Opposed, **D**-Tandem Vee, **E**-Transverse Vee, **F**-Chain Final Drive, **G**-Shaft Final Drive, **H**-Belt Final Drive

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Guest Editorial

Coming To Grips With Free Trade

America says "enough" to Japan Inc.

• American trade policy is coming to grips with the realities of international trade, circa 1983. That is the gist of President Reagan's decision to impose temporary tariffs on imported Japanese heavyweight motorcycles. For in actuality, the motorcycle case represents much larger issues which will determine this country's future economic properity.

The two main issues with which the tariff decision deals are: 1.) the need to insure that free trade also is *fair* trade and 2.) the need to revitalize the American industrial base.

No one would deny that the Japanese motorcycle manufacturers have introduced unparalleled choices to the U.S. consumer. Nor can there be argument over their right to compete. That's simply free enterprise at work and the Japanese have *earned* a major market share due to their efforts. But we can and should contest some of the *methods* by which they market those products, and this begs a question that's central to the issue: Given the quality and variety of their products, why must the Japanese resort to worldwide market exploitation and unfair practices to sell them?

This exploitation includes proven dumping, a history of artifical price suppression and most recently, the flooding of the market with motorcycles far in excess of demand. In the U.S., the flood amounts to enough inventory to supply consumer needs, without further imports, for the next one and one-half years!

The Japanese reached that 18-month inventory, in part, by actually *increasing* production at a time when demand had fallen dramatically. In essence, they were protecting their workers and their economy at the expense of the U.S.—a practice Sen. Robert Kasten terms "exporting unemployment."

"But surely," you might say, "that's their problem. If the Japanese build up inventory and lose money, it's their business, not Harley's." Except it *becomes* our business when practices which run counter to international free trade principles and agreements threaten to destroy Harley-Davidson. Just as surely as the sun will rise tomorrow, the Japanese manufacturers would have solved "their problem" through massive liquidation sales.

Any American company, from an Apple Computers to a General Motors, would find it difficult to survive a competitor's liquidation of a one and one-half year inventory supply. Harley already had suffered significant injury from price suppression by our competitors. Further massive discounting well could have sounded our death knell.

The intent of the tariff is to prevent the liquidation sales. If the next motorcycle the Japanese import costs them a lot more than the ones already here, they won't be quite so quick to "give away" the existing stock.

The tariff no doubt may hurt "innocent bystanders"—those in the market for a Kawasaki GPz1100 or a Honda Interceptor—bikes without a domestic equivalent. But those who argue that Harley and the Japanese "do not compete," as the Japanese manufacturers testified under oath—and those who compare the GPz1100 and the Harley Wide Glide in attempting to make the same point—would mislead you into thinking that Harley does not compete with the Japanese on any front. They ignore market evidence to the contrary.

CYCLE GUIDE's "cruiser" vee comparison (April 1983) of the Harley XLS, Honda 750 Shadow and Yamaha 920 Virago—in which Harley came out the "winner"—is proof. CYCLE GUIDE attests that while the vee *execution* varies, the target customer largely is the same.

In saying "enough" to the inventory flood, the International Trade Commission had to draw a line and it drew it at 700cc since it would have been impossible to define the market on an ever-changing model-by-model basis.

"Innocent bystanders" have only the Japanese manufacturers to blame, for the inventory flood is the only reason Harley took defensive action resulting in the tariffs.

The President's decision also addresses the need to revitalize U.S. industry. Since the mid-1970s, when "Japan Inc." made its move to bigger bikes, Harley has been running hard to meet the challenge, with enormous progress. Since that time, Harley has:

- expanded its product line from three to 19 models;
- redesigned more than 80 percent of its motorcycle components;
- tremendously improved product quality;
- and become a national leader in revamping manufacturing systems to make them the equal of those found anywhere.

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Those who argue that today's Harley-Davidson is the same as in the 1950s have simply ignored facts and are content to live with their misperceptions.

In short, we proved that we did not suddenly wake up to the competition and run to the government for some kind of "bailout." And we would not have received government support had we not proven that we would be fully competitive, without further tariffs, at the end of the five-year relief period.

Gordon Jennings (in 1982, the Japanese manufacturers' main witness at the ITC hearings) wrote for "Car and Driver" magazine in 1970 that, "Japanese industry, government, and the people themselves, have been described—and quite accurately, I think—as Japan Incorporated. The whole country is operated like one gigantic corporation, with the heads of government and the large industrial firms and banks operating as the board of directors. This kind of thing smacks of high-level conspiracy to most Americans . . . ."

His observations still apply. And if U.S. policy refuses to support industries that are trying to revitalize themselves, at the same time those industries are being targeted by their competitors, we are condemning our country to permanent second-rate economic status.

Those who interpret President Reagan's decision as one-sided protectionism seem not to understand that there are clearcut instances in the struggle to establish free trade which require action when the principles of free trade and U.S. laws are violated. In the long run, free and *fair* trade means greater consumer choice, with more, not fewer manufacturers, offering a greater variety of products. Free but *unfair* trade simply surrenders U.S. industry and jobs to foreign attack. —*Vaughn L. Beals*

Vaughn Beals is the chairman of Harley-Davidson Motor Co., Inc. His opinions are in rebuttal to "How Do You Spell Relief," an editorial that ran in Cycle Guide's June 1983 issue.

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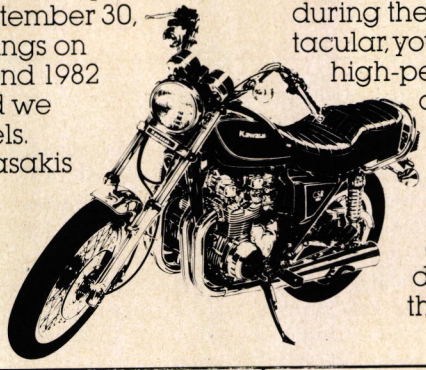

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1981 MODELS	ORIGINAL PRICE*	SALE PRICE†	SAVINGS
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KZ305-A1	$1499	$1099	$400
KZ440-B2	$1669	$1299	$370
KZ440-A2	$1899	$1449	$450
KZ440-D2/D3	$1929	$1499	$430
KZ550-C2	$2419	See dealer	See dealer
KZ550-A2	$2299	See dealer	See dealer
KZ650-H1	$2649	$1899	$750

* Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price October 1, 1982.
† Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price. Actual prices set by dealers. Taxes, license, freight, options and other dealer charges extra.

1982 MODELS	ORIGINAL PRICE*	SALE PRICE†	SAVINGS
KZ250-L1	$1399	$ 999	$400
KZ305-A2	$1549	$1169	$380
KZ305-B1	$1599	$1199	$400
KZ440-G1	$1799	$1399	$400
KZ440-A3	$1949	$1499	$450
KZ440-D4	$1999	$1549	$450
KZ550-C3	$2549	$1999	$550
KZ550-A3	$2399	$1999	$400
KZ650-H2	$2649	$1999	$650

Kawasaki

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Techspeak

Chokes Vs. Enricheners

Motorcycling's two most popular get-rich-quick schemes.

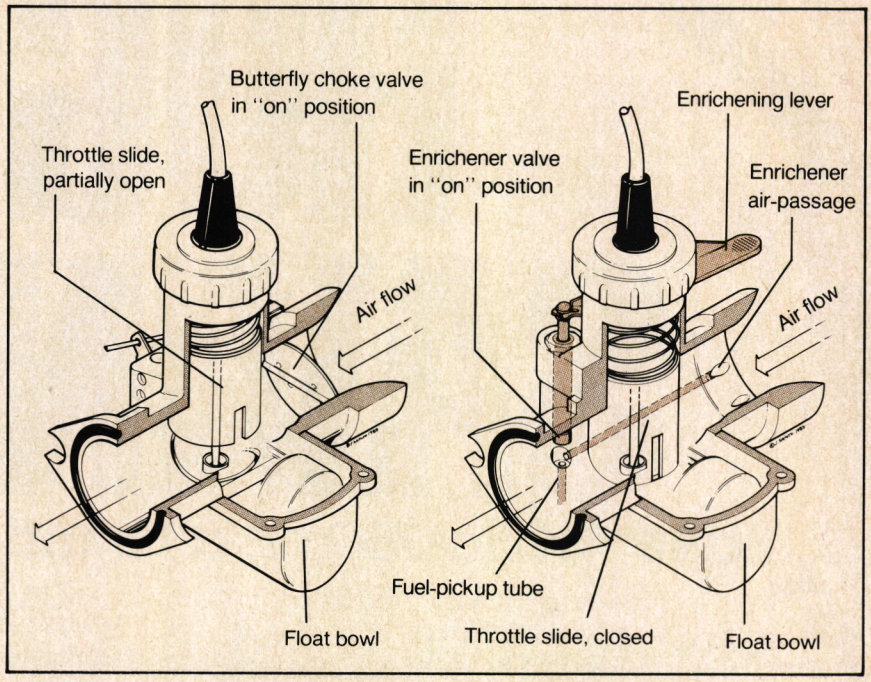
• We Americans call them chokes. The British call them stranglers. And regardless of nationality, anyone who has ever nursed a cantankerous, cold-blooded engine on a frigid morning has probably called them something we can't print here. But whatever they're called, their purpose is clear: to allow a cold engine to be started and warmed to operating temperature with a minimum of stumbling and stalling.

Actually, even the term "choke" is usually a misnomer, since the cold-start mechanisms on most of today's motorcycle carburetors is not a choke at all. It is a separate mixture-enrichening circuit that accomplishes the same thing as a choke but in an entirely different way. Still, most people continue to call any cold-start device a choke anyway, probably because that term is so widely understood.

What's not so commonly known, though, is why a cold-start system is necessary in the first place. The need stems from the way in which the liquid gasoline in the float bowl gets transformed into vaporized gasoline by the time it is ignited in the combustion chamber. That transformation is crucial, for in its liquid state gasoline burns so slowly that it won't support much useful combustion in an engine; but when properly vaporized, gasoline provides excellent combustion, for it virtually explodes when ignited, releasing energy almost instantaneously.

The catch here is that because a carburetor is designed to work with a fully warmed engine, it only partially vaporizes the gasoline. Oh, it mixes air with the fuel and breaks the liquid up into small droplets, all right, but those droplets still are not tiny enough to yield efficient combustion. Indeed, sufficient vaporization occurs only as the gasoline comes in contact with all of the extremely hot surfaces in its path—the intake manifold and ports, the intake valves and guides (in a four-stroke), the piston crown, the combustion-chamber dome and even the cylinder walls.

You've seen this type of vaporization first-hand if you've ever spilled some gasoline on your bike's engine while filling the tank. If the engine was hot, the gas made a sizzling sound while evaporating (turning into vapor) almost immediately; but if the engine was cold, the gasoline just quietly sat there a long time before evaporating.



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Which means, then, that when an engine is cold, its intake surfaces contribute little or nothing to the vaporization process (and remember, even an engine in a bike that has been parked all day in the hot sun is quite "cold" relative to its normal operating temperatures). Consequently, much of the fuel (up to 80 percent of it) isn't fully vaporized when it is ignited. The combustion therefore is very weak, making the engine run either feebly or not at all. And the simplest way to achieve sufficient combustion in a cold engine is to feed it mass quantities of fuel—not well-vaporized fuel, mind you, just lots of it, possibly up to *five times* more than when the engine is hot.

A true choke system accomplishes this ultra-richness by almost totally obstructing the flow of intake air through the carb. Moving the choke lever to its "on" position shuts a large valve (usually either the pivoting-butterfly or sliding-door type) that blocks the carb's intake opening. The normal intake vacuum, of course, remains as strong as always, but since it now can draw practically no air through the intake mouth, it creates a tremendous low-pressure condition in the carburetor venturi. That powerful vacuum sucks large amounts of fuel up out of the float bowl through the needle jet, but there's very little intake air to mix with it. Hence, the necessary super-rich mixture. The engine requires a progressively leaner mixture as it begins to warm, but the rider can gradually raise the choke valve to allow more air into the venturi as needed.

A cold-start enrichener, though, is a totally different concept utilizing a separate fuel-metering circuit that functions only when summoned by the ... er, "choke" lever. The circuit consists of a small air-passage in the carb body that originates in the intake mouth, bypasses the venturi area altogether and empties into the throat of the carb just downstream of the throttle slide (or the butterfly valve in a constant-vacuum carb). Along the way, this main passage is adjoined by a fuel-pickup tube that extends down into the float bowl; and there's a little sliding valve near the discharge end of the circuit that turns the system on and off.

When the circuit is on, intake vacuum causes air to be sucked through the main enrichener passage; the subsequent flow of air across the top of the fuel-pickup tube siphons gasoline up out of the float bowl and into the main passage, where it mixes with the air before being discharged into the carb throat as an ex-

tremely rich mixture. And, just as with a choke system, the starting mixture can be leaned-out as the engine warms by regulating the position of the enrichening lever.

There are, however, some significant differences in the way a rider deals with each system. With a choke, for example, it's usually necessary to open the throttle slightly when starting. This raises the needle up out of its needle jet so sufficient fuel can be drawn into the venturi more easily. But with an enrichener, the throttle is best left *closed* when starting, thus blocking the venturi so maximum intake vacuum can draw through the enrichener circuit. But this also means that the rider must wait until the engine warms a bit before motoring off, because opening the throttle before then will lean the mixture and make the engine falter. A choke, though, generally permits immediate ride-off, because opening the throttle makes the mixture even richer.

Most choke systems also use a mechanical "fast-idle cam" that prevents stalling by speeding up the idle when the choke is engaged. Some chokes even allow the fast-idle speed to be adjusted so it's not faster or slower than necessary for any combination of mixture-enrichment and engine warmth. Making such an adjustment is a fairly complicated task; but it can't be done at all with an enrichener, since that type of system increases idle speed only through the sheer volume of mixture that passes through the enrichening circuit.

Not that chokes are without their disadvantages. For one, should the choke valve somehow get stuck in the fully closed position, the engine will run only down near idle once it warms up—if, in fact, it will run at all. A choke also places additional hardware (choke valve, attaching screws, etc.) in the intake tract where, if something should fall off, it could get sucked into the engine and cause extensive damage. Conversely, if an enrichener gets stuck in its full-on position, the engine won't idle when warm but will perform almost normally at most other throttle openings. Better yet, none of an enrichener's hardware is located where it can get drawn and eviscerate the engine.

These last two considerations are the primary reasons why more and more manufacturers are opting for enrichener instead of chokes. Neither system is perfect, but the ramifications of some sort of choke failure seem far more disastrous than with an enrichener. And after all, an engine might get a lot hungrier when it's cold, but only for things it can burn, not things that can burn *it*.

—*Paul Dean*

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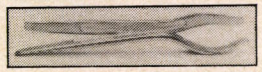

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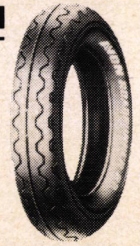

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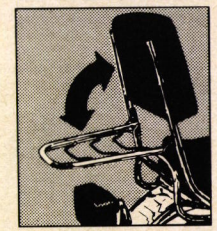

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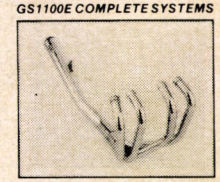

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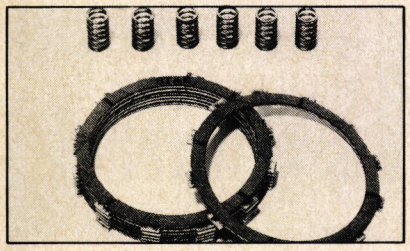
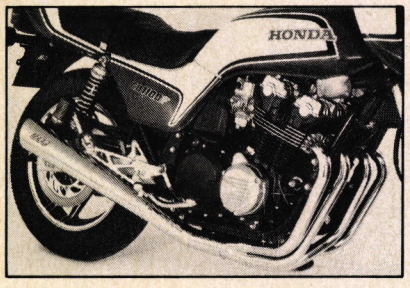


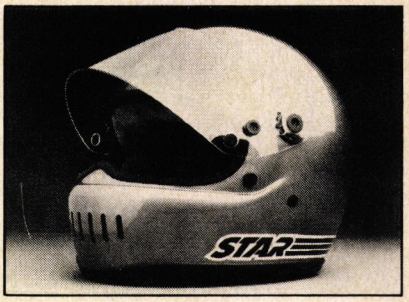
In Me Clutches: You can't get the holeshot, let alone win the race, if your Honda motocrosser's clutch is slipping, but Barnett Tool and Engineering has the plates and springs to take care of the problem. The aluminum alloy plates are applicable to 1983 Honda CR125s, 250s and 480s, and use Barnett's Bar Flex friction material, while the clutch springs are made of heat-treated, shot-peened and stress-relieved valve-spring wire. Suggested retail prices for the clutch plates are $33 for the CR125 and $38.50 for both the CR250 and 480; the clutch springs go for $6.25 for the CR125 and $9.60 for the CR250 and 480. For more information, contact Barnett Tool and Engineering, Dept. CG, P.O. Box 2826, Santa Fe Springs, California 90670.



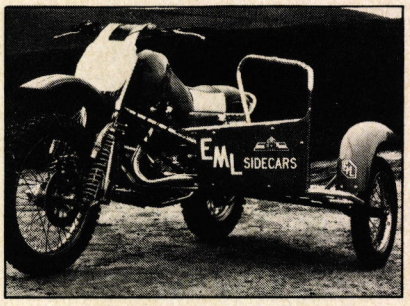
Building a Better SuperTrapp: That's SuperTrapp, not mousetrap. Just the same, SuperTrapp wants you to beat a path to its door for these 4-into-1 exhaust systems, available for popular Honda, Kawasaki, Suzuki and Yamaha motorcycles. The exhausts feature double-wall head pipes to reduce discoloration, a new collector-design for extra cornering clearance and an all-mechanical, maintenance-free, tunable baffle. Suggested retail prices for the pipes, which allow retention of the centerstand and access to the oil drainplug and filter, are $249.95 (chrome finish) and $219.95 (ceramicoat black finish). For more information, write SuperTrapp, Dept. CG, 1222 Research Park Drive, Davis, California 95616.

English Leather: Looking for some flashy new stomps? Redwood Cycle Scene has just the thing with these Frank Thomas Special Racer boots. The Special Racer's features include a leather lining and padding on the shin and ankles. Available colors are black, black/blue with white trim, white/green, white/red with black/gold trim, red/blue with white trim, black/red, and white/blue with red trim. Suggested retail price is $139.95 for men's 5 through 14 full sizes; custom-sized boots are $159.95. For more information, contact Redwood Cycle Scene, Dept. CG, P.O. Box 3192, Santa Rosa, California 95402.

Music Man: If your motorcycle is equipped with a Rifle fairing, the Hoese Corp. Cycle Sound will let you take your traveling music with you. The Cycle Sound features two grill-covered, waterproof speakers, an ABS-plastic housing, concealed antenna, a positive-latch radio cover and a power-supply filter; all you add is the radio. Suggested retail price of the Cycle Sound for Rifle fairings is $79.95. To find out more, write to Hoese Corp., Dept. CG, P.O. Box 41, Bulverde, Texas 78163.



LTD Lid: Bell Helmets Inc. now offers a luxury version of the firm's Star helmet: the Star LTD. The LTD retains all the features of the standard Star, such as a one-piece neck-and-ear roll, removable ear-cavity pads and the detented, multi-position shield mechanism, while adding some of its own, like an interior lined with gray velour, a velour sleeve over the chinstrap, and wire-mesh-covered vent slots in front. Also included in the $184.95 suggested retail price is a clear .080-inch-thick polycarbonate shield. The helmet meets or exceeds Snell '80 and Z90.1b standards. To find out more, write Bell Helmets Inc., Dept. CG, P.O. Box 1020, Norwalk, California 90650.



A Fine Madness: Well, what else would you call sidecar motocross? But if you've a passion for that sort of thing, or just want to burst berms right into the middle of next week, Schnoor Sales has the means in the form of its world championship-winning E.M.L. sidecar chassis. The E.M.L.'s frame is constructed of nickel-plated chromoly, and complete rolling chassis are available for Yamaha, Honda, Ducati, Norton, BMW and Maico engines, among others. Suggested retail price for the setup is $2800, excluding electrics, engine and carburetors. For more information, write Schnoor Sales, Dept. CG, 12801 San Fernando Road, Sylmar, California 91342.

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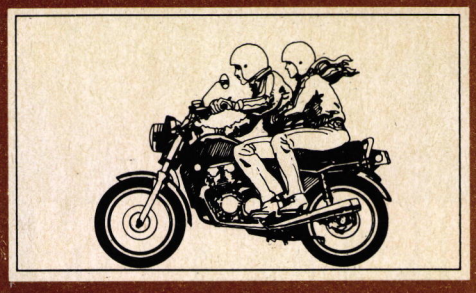

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MOTORCYCLE Of The YEAR

Credit where credit is due.

Put bluntly, 1983 has been one hell of a year for motorcycling—and it's not over yet. More has gone on in moto-'83 than in any year to date. Between the ITC tariff decision, the promise of catalytic convertors on many '84 models and Superbike racing's 750cc displacement limit, more forces were working on motorcycling than ever before.

It's not just those outside forces that made the year significant, though; more new models hit the showroom floors in '83 than at any other time in motorcycle history. That flood of choices in how and what you ride heralded in more new technology, brute horsepower, refinement and sheer excellence than has ever before been available over the counter. And such an event, we believe, deserves a monument; this is it, CYCLE GUIDE's Motorcycle Of The Year award. Or, as we've come to call it, the Silver Bullet.

But don't file this with someone else's list of the 10 Best. That kind of category-think can lead to such meaningless extremes as passing out trophies for the best midsize sport-tourer with chain-drive and a quarter-fairing. It's a fill-in-the-blank award, in which the category is more important than the motorcycle. And no one we know rides categories.

You won't find any of that here. We have one award, which goes to the motorcycle that's had the most impact on 1983—and, by extension, the biggest effect on motorcycling for the future. No attempt has been made to give each manufacturer equal space. We're talking superlatives here; check your qualifiers at the door. We don't serve their kind.

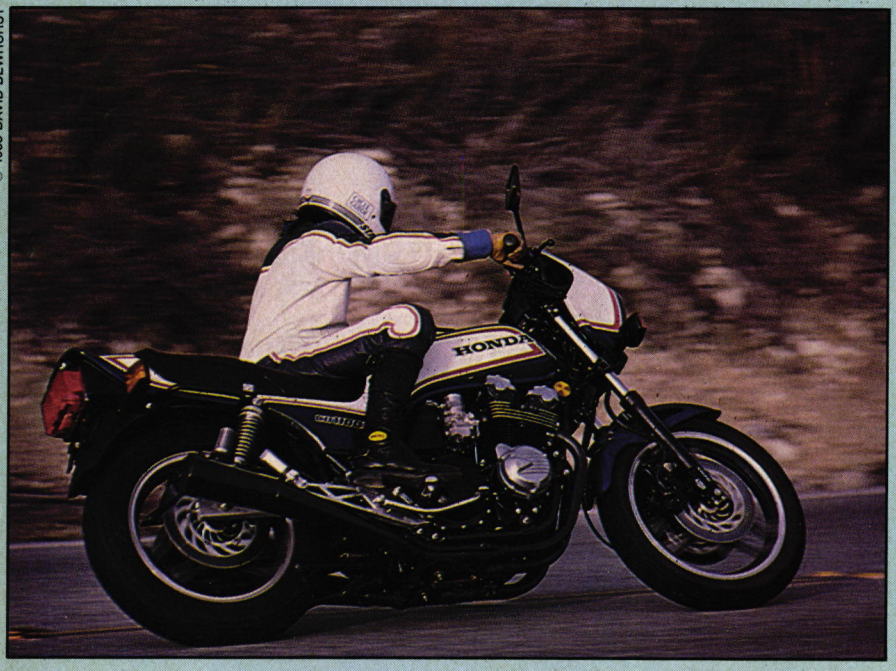
In fact, this isn't the 10 Best, 10 Most Important or even 10 of anything. We've settled on nine bikes, the nine we felt were the most significant. Next year it could be five, or 20—the more the better, as far as we're concerned. These nine, by virtue of being the best, worst, most ingenious, most techno-intensive or whatever, set themselves in their own class. The motorcycle determines the category, not vice versa. But however these bikes distinguished themselves, they are all motorcycles we're sure will be remembered, perhaps not even for how they performed but for what they *meant*. And from that collection of worthies we've picked one—and only one—that stands out from the rest. The one that had the most effect on moto-'83. The one with the most impact on the motorcycles we'll all be riding next year.

The envelope, please.

Continued

Silver Bullet Award

Honda CB1100F



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• No, the F's technology isn't particularly new. And, minus LCD readouts and radical restyling, the F rates low on the flash-and-dazzle scale. In 1983, a year marked by ever-increasing motorcycle innovation, this bike might seem out of place in contention for the Silver Bullet. We don't think so.

Granted, the CB1100F traces its basic design to the 750F of 1979. And, short of a quarter-fairing, increased displacement and some suspension changes, not too much separates this F from that one of five model years past. So what?

As we see it, the 1100F is the refinement of a sport-riding institution. The other side of the F's nothing-new approach is a basic, high-performance sport machine that gives its rider a full measure of the experience of riding a hyperbike. And that experience comes at a cost hundreds of dollars less than the F's competition.

Rumor has it that the end of the transverse-four F-series is approaching. Room has to be made for new models—chiefly of vee-four configu-

Yamaha XVZ12TDK Venture Royale

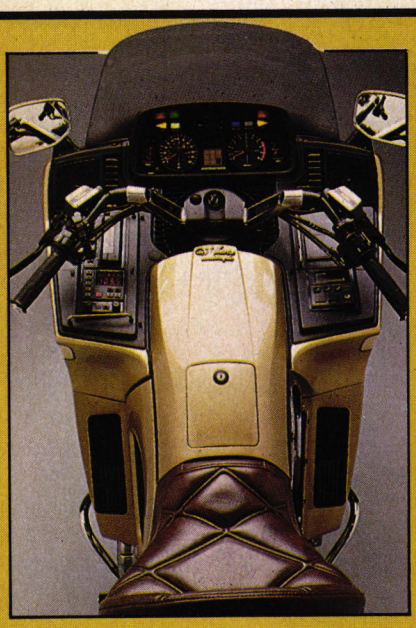
© 1983 VIC HUBER

• In counting the moto-achievements of 1983's hardware, touring played a bigger role than ever. Honda's Aspencade, until now the unchallenged king of the turn-key tourers, finally got some heads-up competition. Yamaha's vee-four Venture Royale and Kawasaki's transverse-six Voyager arrived to give the GL a long-distance run for its money.

So why did we pick the Yamaha over the Kawasaki for inclusion in this select group? While the Voyager is loaded to the gunwales with interesting gadgets to please the eye and delight the long-haul palate, it continues up the same straight highway that the Gold Wing has been traveling for years. That's not to say there's anything wrong with riding the Superslab; just that there's nothing new about it, either.

But the Royale, while still obviously configured to fulfill full-dress fantasies, adds a new dimension: a more sport-oriented approach. Good handling, ground clearance, two-up passing without downshifting and sport-

ration. If that's the case, we'll be sorry to see the F shunted aside. On a performance-per-dollar basis, no streetbike made can touch it. And we're here to tell you that cost-effective performance *is* significant.



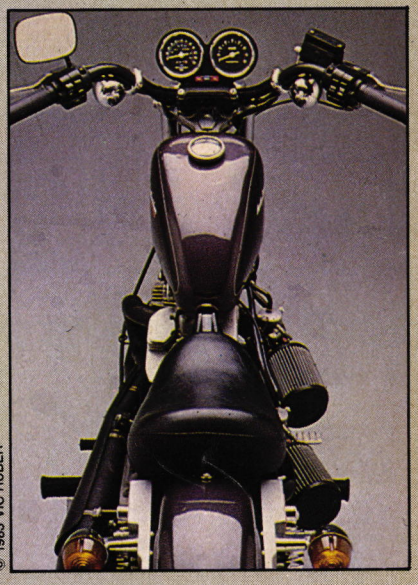
capable suspension haven't been part of the glossary of touring terms, but the Royale proves that such things are possible, without compromising the full-on luxo-haul. It earned this recognition for aiming American touring in a new direction—one that includes twisty roads.

Harley-Davidson XR1000

• Where else would the XR1000, the most radical streetbike ever offered to the public, belong but on this list? Well, it looks like it would be more at home at some county fairground, sliding its way around a dirt oval and pelting onlookers with clods of American Dirt.

No one could accuse the XR of flaunting high technology, but it isn't run-of-the-mill Harley fare, either. Not with those twin, left-side-mounted megaphones proclaiming otherwise. And not with two pumper Dell'Ortos and their K&N filters jutting from the right side. From its Jerry Branch-flowed aluminum heads to its Dunlop Sport Elite tires, the 1000 is anything but typical Harley-Davidson. Not only is it the fastest production bike H-D has ever offered to the public, it probably holds the record as the quickest execution of a streetbike concept, having gone from the drawing boards of the racing department to the production line in just 60 days.

Aside from sheer speed, of production or otherwise, the XR rates a berth in this group because it signals new life emanating from Milwaukee. No, it



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isn't the street-legal XR750 that riders have been asking for for years, but the XR has something else going for it: domination of the stock class of Battle Of The Twins roadracing. And if it had done nothing else, the XR would belong here as the motorcycle that—indirectly—put Jay Springsteen, the winningest AMA Grand National Champion of all time, back onto roadrace tracks.

Continued

Silver Bullet Award

Honda CR250R

© 1983 DAVID DEWHURST

• We were tempted to aim the Silver Bullet at the entire CR line, because at no time in the past few seasons has a line of motocrossers given such a uniformly good showing. 125, 250 or Open class, in 1983 if you're capable of winning, you can win on a CR. We settled on the 250, though, as the one that most clearly dominates its class.

Other 250s can be *made* to perform as well—or nearly as well—but the CR comes the closest to works-quality performance right out of the box. At 217 pounds, it is a scant pound over the FIM minimum-weight limit, and it feels even lighter. More to its credit, the CR's excellent low-rpm power and ergonomics instill rider-confidence, making it one motocrosser a Beginner could start on—and ride all the way to the Expert class.

But eligibility for our Motorcycle Of The Year doesn't come from simple performance. What makes the CR equally notable is its darker side, a tradeoff for its on-track prowess. Not only does it provide near-works levels of performance, it also requires that same caliber of maintenance. Honda

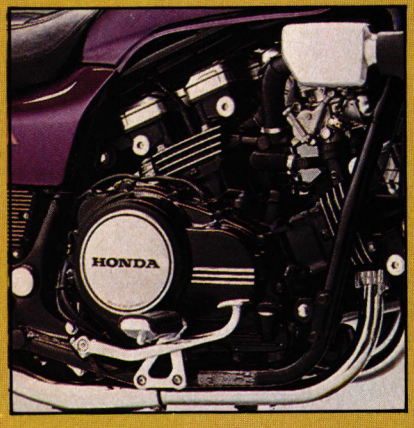
Honda V65 Magna

© 1983 VIC HUBER

• There is no way to compile the year's most significant motorcycles without including Honda's media star, the V65. You've seen it on television and in magazines, burning up the dragstrip, and you've seen it on the streets, humbling everything in its vicinity with raw, brute acceleration. But despite its media superstar status and much-advertised 10-second quarter-miles, this musclebike is going to be remembered for what it isn't: a sportbike.

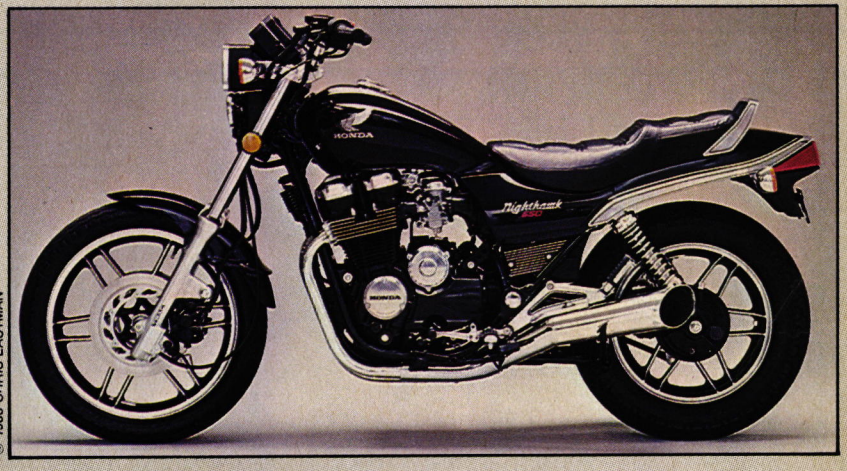
Honda figured that since American riders have shown a marked preference for factory customs, and since they also tend to count dragstrip times as the bottom line on performance, the two should be combined. The result is the Magna, a mean-streets urban troller with massive straightline muscle. Despite its relative complexity, the V65's mission profile is stone-simple: In the arena of stoplight warfare, this is the doomsday machine.

has made parts changes on the CR in response to problems—both piston and rear suspension failures—but reports from around the country are that the CR is still labor-intensive. That's not to say you can't win on one, as the CR's record indicates. But it does show that the CR250 has established new highs for a production motocrosser—both on the track and in the garage.



That Honda paired custom styling with its state-of-the-art engine points a new path for the cruiser of tomorrow. That powerhouse vee-four could have gone to an Interceptor-type package but didn't—at least not for '83. Instead, the V65 turned its back on the traditional roadracy requirements for street performance, opting for power to the people—or at least, to the biggest market segment.

Honda CB650SC Nighthawk



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• If you could get two bikes for the price of one, would that catch your attention? It caught ours. One of the two bikes in question is a new, sporting 650 with a 10,000-rpm redline, a close-ratio gearbox with an overdrive sixth speed, dead-neutral handling and to top it off, a 12.28-second quarter-mile. For the same price you also get a midsize factory-custom with all the street-style you could ask for: a 16-inch rear wheel, teardrop gas tank, stepped seat and baloney-slice exhausts. They won't even take up much room in your garage, because the two bikes are the CB650SC Nighthawk . . . and the CB650SC Nighthawk.

We count the Nighthawk 650 as deserving of space here not merely because it's an all-new motorcycle but because it's a new *kind* of motorcycle. It's a hybrid sport-custom, designed from the ground up to attract not only sport riders looking for a quick performance-fix, but to draw in custom riders with an eye toward urban high chic. That it accomplished that goal with so few compromises makes the SC memorable in our book. It is neither just a styling job applied to a sportbike, nor a cruiser with a hot-rod motor. Rather, it's a conceptual master stroke, with equally brilliant execution.

Continued

Silver Bullet Award

Can-Am Sonic MX

© 1983 DAVID DEWHURST

• The motocross world probably didn't sit up and take notice of this white-and-orange Open-classer, but we're betting it will. There won't be many Sonics listed in race results this year, but that's partially because, compared to the numbers of Open-classers from other manufacturers, there won't be many Sonics even *on* motocross tracks.

What earns this Can-Am a spot on this list is that it's a four-stroke, the latest in a long line of thumpers that were going to convert the motomasses from two-strokes to four-strokes. But this one is different. It's not the basis for a competitive motocrosser, not some big-engined one-off that might be able to win if enough technodollars were funneled into it. The Sonic is a *production* motocrosser, the only four-stroke in recent memory to have "MX" as part of its nomenclature.

Can-Am didn't play fast and loose with four-stroke physics, though; the Sonic has all of a thumper's disadvantages for racing: weight and a high *cg*. But it also offers tractability and low-rpm torque, the reasons thumper fanatics *are* fanatics; and it has a quick-revving motor that acts more like a two-stroke than a four-stroke. And thrown into the equation is world-class steering, the best of any motocrosser we've ridden. As a competitive Open-classer, the Sonic MX is in the hunt; as proof that a four-stroke can win, it's in a class by itself.

Honda VT750 Shadow

• Just as surely as Honda's V65 belongs in this group, another of that firm's new cruisers belongs here as well, though for a completely different set of reasons. The VT750 Shadow warrants a shot at the Silver Bullet as the year's most flagrant example of techno-overkill.

To capture the audience Honda wanted for the Shadow, the bike had to have the *look* of traditional American motorcycles copied perfectly. Harleyesque shock bodies, the sissybar and the split-look seat were simple styling licks. But to really nail down the appearance of the Gear That Made Milwaukee Famous, the Shadow needed a vee-twin engine with a 45 degree cylinder spread. It got it, as well as every techno-trick in the book—and some that hadn't yet been written into the book.

Into that traditional-look custom went liquid-cooling, twin-plug combustion chambers, three-valve heads, a hydraulically actuated clutch with a Sprague-type overrun unit, and innovative zero-clearance valve-lash adjusters. And to get the right cylinder spread (read: the made-in-Milwaukee look), Honda employed an ingenious arrangement of staggered crankpins to get the style—without the primary imbalance of a cylinder spread of less than 90 degrees.

The end product manages to achieve the look of a native-born cruiser. But with all that technology crammed into a traditional-look custom, it has the authenticity of a wax apple packed with nutrient capsules.

Honda V45 Interceptor

• Despite fierce competition, we chose Honda's V45 Interceptor as 1983's Motorcycle Of The Year. The decision on our inaugural Silver Bullet wasn't easy, though, for as you've seen, this year's hardware is literally jammed with memorable motorcycles. And, as the number of Hondas that made the final cut for the Bullet shows, the lion's share of superlatives—this year—belongs to Honda. But as far as we're concerned, no other motorcycle—from any manufacturer—can match the Interceptor in completeness of execution or in its impact on the future of motorcycling.

The Interceptor's near-perfect execution produced a motorcycle so versatile that it links such diverse riding styles as day-to-day commuting with the ten-tenths demands of roadracing. That's no small feat, and much of the Interceptor's greatness lies in how little it compromises either riding extreme. Moreover, our 1983 winner is proof that racing improves the breed. The bike is a product of the lowered displacement limit for AMA Superbikes, and fairly bristles with techno-trickle-down from roadracing. But as we see it, the value of the Interceptor's racy bits—from a square-section frame, 16-inch front wheel and simply outstanding brakes—goes beyond what they can do at the racetrack. *Any* rider can appreciate them.

But as we've said before, simply being good—or even great—doesn't guarantee a motorcycle a shot at the Bullet. There are just too many good motorcycles around for that. And what netted the Interceptor top honors for 1983 wasn't just its performance. We count this motorcycle as a landmark, one that in years to come will be remembered for playing as important a role in moto-history as the transverse-four CB750 of 1969. The Interceptor isn't the first of the modern vee-fours; that distinction belongs to Honda's V45 Sabre and V45 Magna of last year. But even more than those two vee-fours—even more than the V65 Magna or Yamaha's Venture Royale in contention for the Silver-Bullet—we believe the Interceptor insures a vee-four future for motorcycling. The across-the-board enthusiasm it generated—on racetracks as well as on the street—not only revitalized manufacturers' interest in sportbikes, it cemented the success of the vee-four as the next step in moto-evolution. This bike's wide acceptance assures you'll be seeing more vee-fours in showrooms next year. And if all of them are as phenomenal as this one, 1984's Silver Bullet awards will be crowded, indeed. •

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GUIDE LINES

Cycle Guide's Monthly Chronicle of Scoops, Tips, Rumors and Hard Facts

BY JOE KRESS

COMING SOON

• If it's motorcycle competition, you can bet it's important to Honda. And if Honda doesn't have a bike suitable for the event in question, you also can bet that it will build one. The prestigious Paris-to-Dakar Rally, that torturous African desert race, is a prime example. Winning the Paris-to-Dakar can be a valuable sales tool, especially in Europe. But that's an advertising weapon Honda didn't own, because the company didn't have a bike capable of winning—until now. The new XLV750R takes dead aim at the Paris-to-Dakar, while also serving as the perfect dual-purpose mount for the rider who wants to appear serious about his sport. The XLV uses an air-cooled version of the Shadow's 45 degree vee-twin engine. And taking a page from the Interceptor's book, this on-/off-roader also has a frame fabricated from square-section tubing. But whether or not the XLV750 has what it takes to put that Paris-to-Dakar win in Honda's '84 ad campaign is something we'll have to wait to find out. However, it won't take long to find out just how good this air-cooled twin is. The engine is the basis for Honda's RS750 flattracker, the bike just starting to challenge the Harleys on American dirt ovals. And who's to say that some wins there wouldn't be just as valuable a sales tool?

• The on-again off-again Hesketh is, once more, on. This time the British superbike, now being assembled at the rate of one per week, has a U.S. distributor. Aston Martin Lagonda of North America (342 W. Putnam Ave., Greenwich, Connecticut 06830) has announced it will be selling the 992cc, 90 degree vee-twin-powered machine starting immediately. AML also will stock spares and offer service for the four-cam, eight-valve bike. And, as with the exotic automobiles AML also imports, prices for the Hesketh are "available on application."

• It also takes an application—from a police department—to get the price on another English motorcycle: the Norton rotary. That long-promised rotary finally is available. There's a catch, though; right now it's only being offered to police departments, and it's called the Norton Interpol II. The 410-pound, 120-mph bikes belong to the Nottinghamshire police, but Norton officials say production machines will be available to the public later this year.

The Honda XLV750R might be a valuable sales tool, either in Europe or over here

It all depends upon which race it wins first.

Lord Alexander's Hesketh might have been down, but it isn't out

And now it has a U.S. importer, too.

• And Norton isn't the only specialty-bike manufacturer vying for police business. The Brazilian Amazonas factory has just released its newest model: a law-enforcement version of the company's 1600cc VW-powered bike. Still using VW engines, brakes and gearboxes (complete with reverse), the most noticeable changes on this newest Amazonas are its exhaust system and bodywork. Unlike the Norton, though, a civilian-model of this bike is available right now.

• 125cc streetbikes might not fill the roads in this country, but in Europe the 125 is a highly successful, and hotly contested, category. Honda's bid for this market comes through Honda Italia Industriale S.p.A., the compa-

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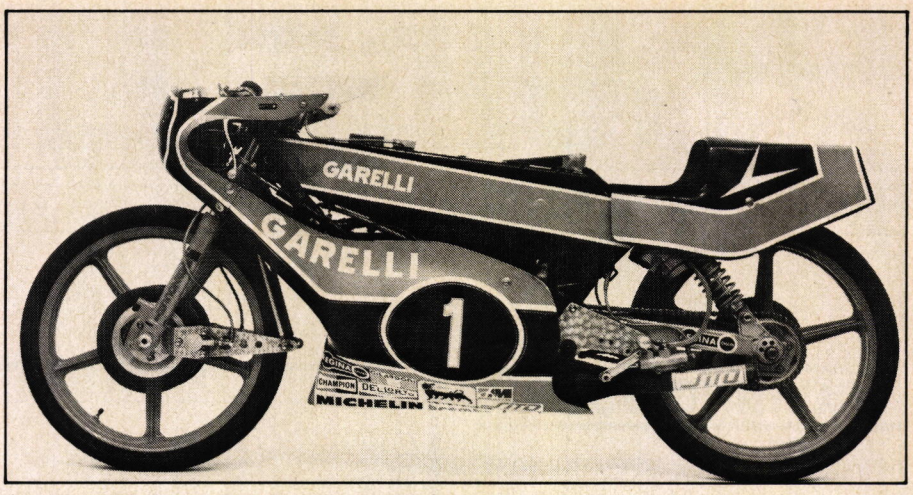
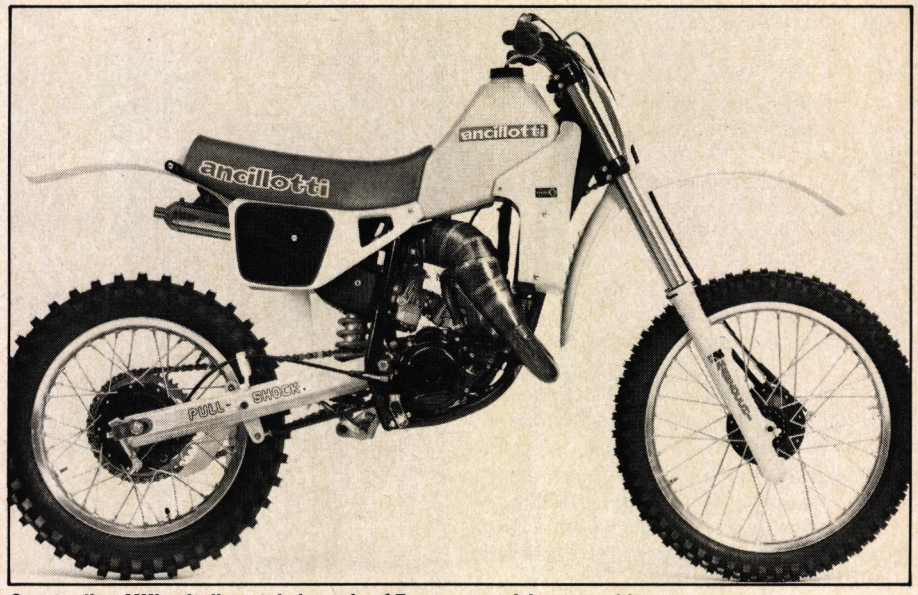


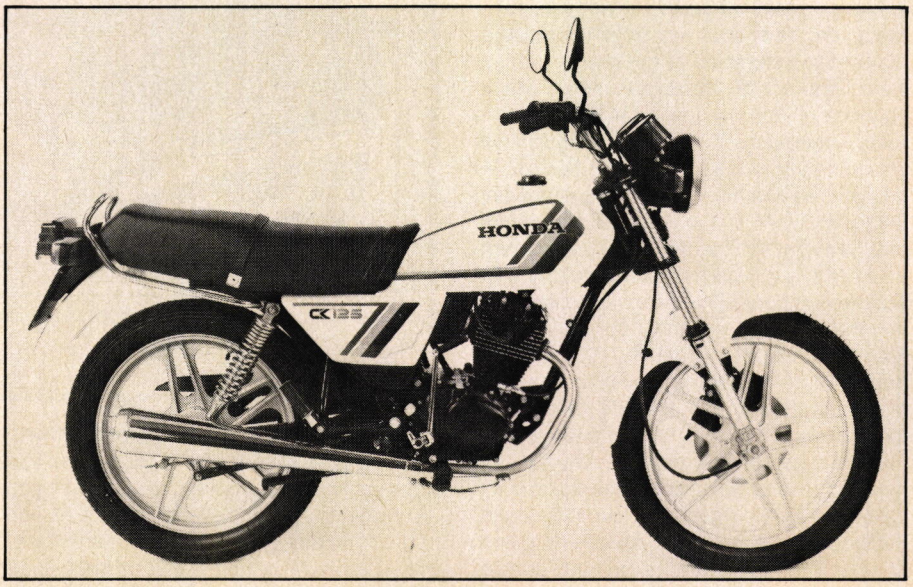
Garelli's eighth-liter roadracer bristles with big-bike technology

And packs a big wallop in its 125cc engine.



Quarter-liter MXing Italian-style is a mix of European and Japanese ideas

Brought together to take on the world.

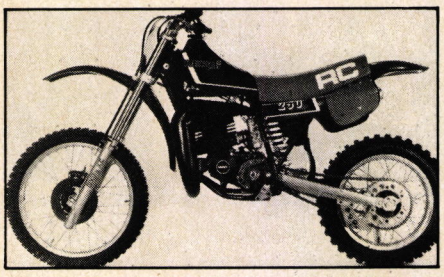


There's absolutely no question that the CK125 is a Honda

But this one's made in Italy.

Norton's Rotary finally has made it

On sale later this year?



A serious Spanish MXer: the Derbi 250RC

With a former champion to ride it.

ny's Italian subsidiary. The CK125, just introduced, is similar to the made-in-Japan Honda 125, but close examination reveals subtle differences in this Italian-made version. Most noticeable is the Paioli fork, mounting a single-disc brake. And while there are other, less apparent, Italian-made components used throughout the CK, its powerplant is basic Honda. It's a four-stroke single with a SOHC head and a 9.4:1 compression ratio. And the 12 horsepower produced by that diminutive thumper is put to the pavement through a five-speed gearbox.

• Garelli has attacked the 125cc streetbike market from a different angle. That Italian company's arsenal includes this latest update of the TSR125, a machine first introduced in 1981. It's a liquid-cooled two-stroke that breathes through a 26mm Dell'Orto carburetor to produce its claimed 16 horsepower. But the mechanicals aren't what's new about the TSR—it's the look. The bike now has a quarter-fairing, a newly designed tank and body, and an all-around sporting feel that it previously lacked. And looks sell; Garelli already reports a sharp increase in the demand for the new-style TSR.

• But speed sells, too. Consequently, Garelli also introduced its new 125cc GP racer. This eighth-liter, two-stroke buzzbomb puts out considerably more power than the 16 horsepower of the TSR. The GP bike, with the aid of

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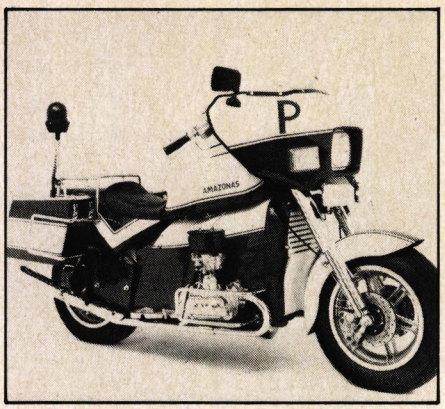
twin Dell'Ortos, a 14.0:1 compression ratio, liquid-cooling and electronic ignition, is claimed to churn out 47 horsepower at 14,600 rpm. And Marzocchi suspension front and rear, Brembo Goldline brakes and five-spoke magnesium wheels round out Garelli's package.

• Another Italian manufacturer, Ancillotti, puts the power from its 125 to another use, though. This eighth-liter's 31 horsepower gets to the dirt through a single-shock rear suspension that is matched to a Marzocchi fork. And the hand-built exhaust system on this motocrosser, along with its chromoly frame and Corte Cosso oil/gas rear shock, are just some of the other features this bike brings to the berms.

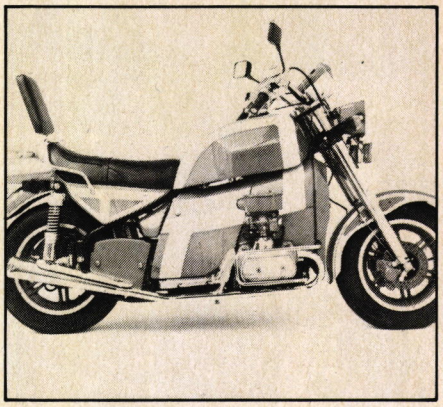
• The Spanish Derbi factory has a new machine ready for the European motocross wars, too. Former 125cc and 250cc champion Toni Elias will be riding the new 250RC this year, Derbi's first really serious motocrosser. The 250 uses a Marzocchi fork up front, while a White Power shock controls the bike's Pro-Flex rear suspension. Its 246cc, air-cooled two-stroke puts out 42 horsepower and, with all the style of a modern motocrosser, the 250RC has a front disc brake, too. That 230mm Brembo disc is coupled with a rear drum-type brake to haul down this 231-pound racer.

• For another type of competition, enduros this time, Jawa has a new bike ready. The just-released 560 is the result of a collabora-



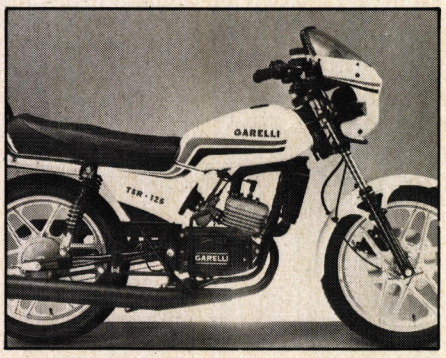
Look what's in the rearview mirror

It's come all the way from Brazil.



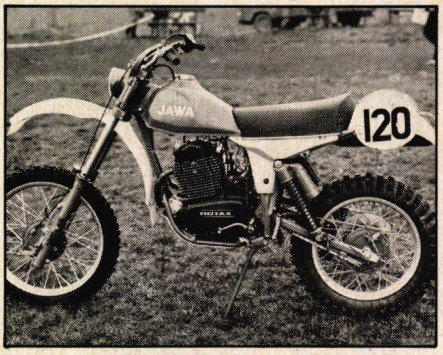
Amazonas cop-bike, civilian-style

Without the bells and whistles.



The TSR125 suddenly is a big seller

All due to its new look.



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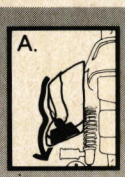
*Most soft saddlebags are pretty flimsy when empty. This makes it difficult to load your gear. And when packed, the load is poorly supported, causing it to sag and sway. Not only does this detract from the appearance of your motorcycle, it can seriously affect its handling. (See Fig. A)



Eclipse Saddlepacks incorporate a unique internal aluminum frame to support and define the shape of the pack at its outside, upper perimeter. This frame transfers the load back to the aluminum stiffener, for ease of loading and even weight distribution within the pack. It also maintains the shape of the pack when loaded or empty. No sag . . . no sway. (See Fig. B)

tion between Jawa and Rotax, the Austrian engine manufacturer. The Bombardier-built four-stroke engine, which produces close to 50 horsepower in this application, might be what it takes to put Jawa in the winner's circle. The first bikes shown are, to say the least, robust and, in standard Jawa practice, have a completely enclosed chain drive. These new Jawas will first see competition this September, at the 1983 ESDT in Wales.

FEDERAL CASES

• Life for a New England-based off-road rider could get tougher. Five of the six states in that region recently had bills introduced that would further regulate off-road motorcycles. Maine and Vermont are considering registration programs for trail bikes; Massachusetts and Rhode Island might implement stiffer penalties for off-road riding infractions; and New Hampshire could change its registration procedure for off-road bikes.

• And a little further south on the Eastern Seaboard, streetriders in New York City might be in for trouble, too. A five-year-old proposal to ban nighttime use of motorcycles on the streets of the Big Apple has been revived. This proposal, sponsored by eight City Council members, would prohibit motorcycle riding on most city streets there between the hours of 9 p.m. and 8 a.m. And there's another catch; the bill has a clause allowing it to take effect immediately after enactment, before any warning signs could be posted. This latest NYC bike-ban hasn't yet had a public hearing. However, the City Council is asking for "comments and recommendations." You can send them to Carol Bellamy, New York City Council, City Hall, New York, NY 10007.

• And if you're planning a ride through Nevada, restrict alcohol consumption even more than usual. That state has just adopted one of the toughest drunk-driving laws in the country. The new law calls for a minimum two-day jail term, or 48 hours of public service, for first-time offenders. Get caught a second time and it's 10 days to six months, plus a fine of up to $5000. And a third-time conviction now results in a prison term of one to six years, with a three-year license revocation following that.

• In California, Assembly bill 596, just introduced, would mandate that any motorcycle bought by a state agency be assembled in this country, or that it consist of at least 75 percent U.S.-made parts.

HARD CASH

• The under-$2000 650cc twin is alive and well. U.S. Suzuki has just announced a price cut on its new GR650-series bikes, the company's Eighties-style vertical twin introduced earlier this year. The GR650XD, the bare-bones, wire-spoked-wheel version of the twin now retails for $1999, down $150 from its

Continued

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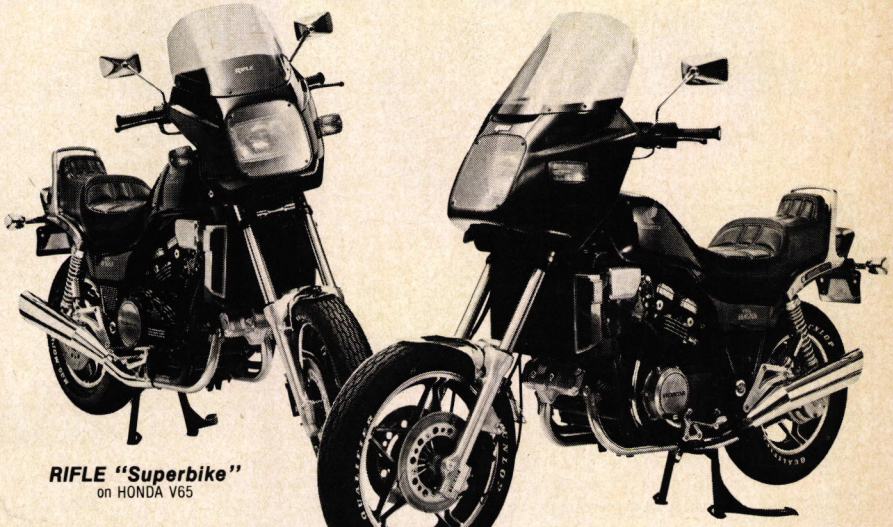

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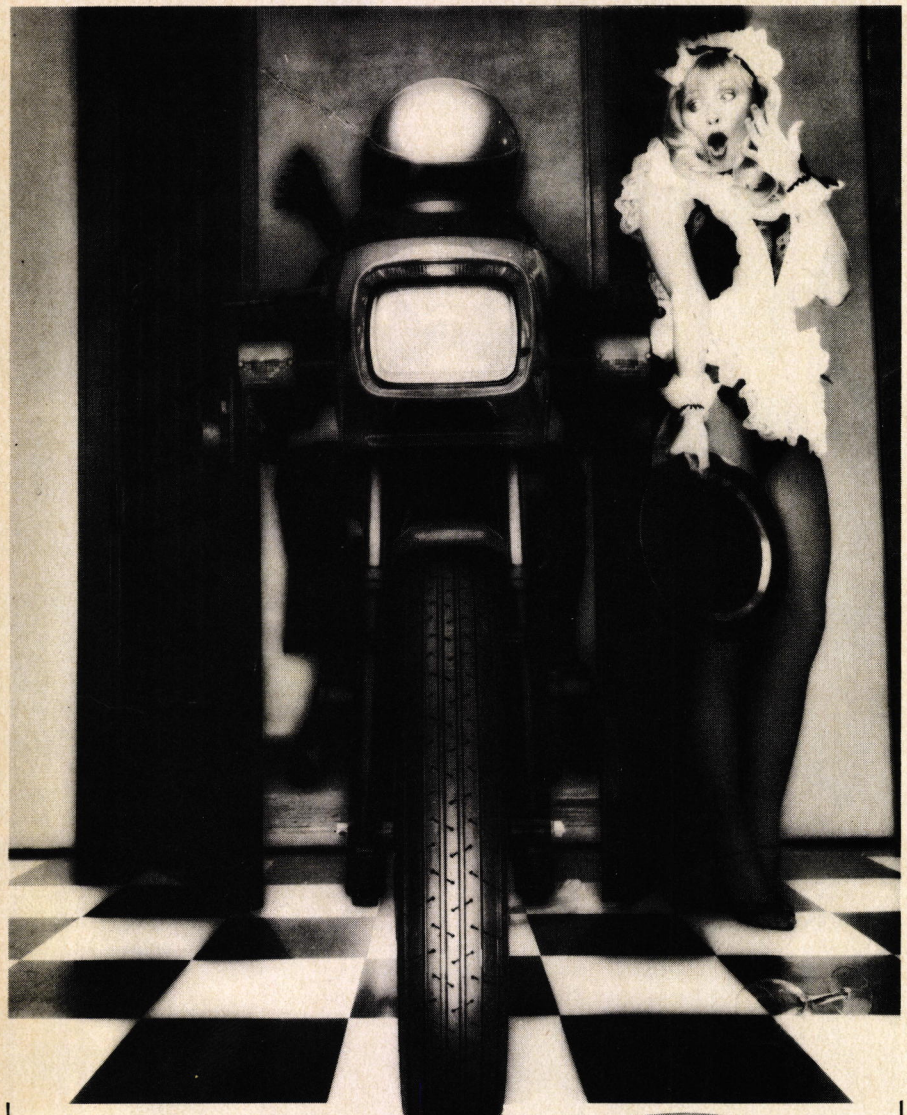

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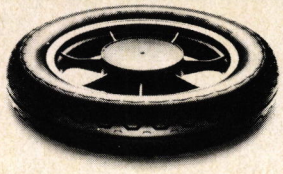

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AVON

previous price of $2149. The GR650D, the classier, cast-wheel version of the bike, also has a new, lower price. That bike now lists for $2199, down a full $200 from its previous sticker price of $2399.

• Meanwhile, Triumph, the company that made the vertical twin famous, is in trouble again. The British bike firm ceased production in May, and sent its workforce home due to a lack of financing. But Triumph hasn't given up yet. The county council of Coventry, the town Triumph had just moved back to, offered a $2 million rescue package to the company, aimed at keeping the local employment rate up. However, the county money is contingent upon Triumph securing an additional $1 million from private investors. County officials are helping Triumph with the negotiations and, according to one financial spokesman, things look "hopeful." The county has not set a time deadline for its proposal, but insiders believe Triumph could be gone for good if it completely misses this summer's selling season.

• Of course, it goes without saying that Honda isn't worried about missing this year's selling season; this company is number one in the industry and pulling away. The latest 1983 statistics, compiled by R.L. Polk & Company, show Honda with a 57.49 percent share of the total motorcycle market. Yamaha is a distant second, with a 16.55 percent share. Suzuki and Kawasaki round out the Japanese manufacturers, placing third and fourth in total unit sales with a 13.29 percent and a 7.99 percent of the market, respectively. Harley-Davidson, the only American motorcycle manufacturer, has a 3.29 percent share of the market and, according to R.L. Polk's figures, BMW is the leading European motorcycle manufacturer, with its 0.67 percent market share.

• In this country, dragbike competition in Pro Stock and Top Fuel is pretty hot, too. The holder of the Number One plate in both those classes, Terry Vance of Vance & Hines Racing, was campaigning a Honda CB1100F to retain that position. But now he's getting help from someplace other than Honda; Accel, one of the world's largest manufacturers of performance ignition products, has signed Vance to an endorsement and development contract.

• Those are the kinds of contracts amateur racers dream about. But there is money for those amateurs, even without contracts. Team Green, Kawasaki's helping hand to amateur motocross, has just posted nearly $60,000 in contingency-award prize money. $500 in cash will go to the parent/tuner, and a $500 savings bond will be awarded to each winning Kawasaki rider at the August 2nd NMA Grand National Championships at Ponca City, Oklahoma and again at the August 10th Kawasaki National Motocross Championships, held in Hurricane Mills, Tennessee. Kawasaki contingency money is available in all of the 29 separate classes contested at both events.

RUMORS

• If you think our chrome-plated Interceptor, this year's Bike Of The Year, is something, just wait. Because, if what we've been hearing lately proves true we just might have to dip yet another Honda next year. If you liked the 750cc Interceptor as much as we did, you're going to love what could be next year's model: an 1100. Early word has it that this liter-plus Interceptor generates 120 horsepower and will sport a look not unlike the Euro-only CB1100R.

• Of course, that bike, with a displacement well above the ITC's tarrif cut-off point of 700cc, might not be the only big news from Honda for '84. Insiders in that company hint we might want to get ready for some existing U.S. models to show up in smaller sizes next year. And not just 699cc, either. In one after-hours conversation the subject of a VF550F Interceptor came up. How does that sound to you?

• But maybe you're not in the market for a Honda vee-four. In that case, how about one from Kawasaki? We've already told you about that company's interest in vee-fours (Rumors, July '83), but now we're hearing that the Kawasaki interest might show up as soon as late this year. And if what we're hearing is true, it'll show up as a liquid-cooled 750.

• Something else that we've been hearing about Kawasaki is an AR250. This machine, so goes the story, will be a road-going version of the company's 250cc, rotary-valve, tandem-twin racebike. It appears the Japanese 250-class war is really heating up.

• And that quarter-liter competition is so fierce, what with the possibility of the new Kawasaki, the existing Suzuki Gamma 250, Yamaha RZs and the Honda MVX250, that Honda's other 250, the VT250 four-stroke, is a little out of its element. But we've just been told that help is on the way for that bike, and it might come in the form of forced induction. Our man on the inside is certain that a turbocharger is in the VT250's very near future.

• Of course, that's a turbo not many riders in this country will ever sample. But there's talk of another turbobike from Honda that, if it does show up, Americans most certainly would get to ride. Think of the Honda that was designed with U.S. riders in mind and you'll have the bike that we've heard is the latest candidate for a turbo. If you said Shadow 750, you hit it right on the head.

• And on another front, if you presently own a Ducati you might have a collector's item on your hands. Word from Europe is that the Italian company is going out of the motorcycle business. But we're told it's not a complete break; Ducati still will manufacture engines, primarily for Cagiva.

• And speaking about engine production, that subject brings up something we've been told about Yamaha. With company profits from motorcycles down, and close to 1000 employees moved off production, we've heard that Yamaha has bid for contracts to produce powerplants. But not for motorcycles; this source tells us Yamaha wants to build automobile engines.

• And another hint about possible engines concerns Suzuki, and this one, too, has to do with four-wheelers. That company's 4x6 off-road play vehicle just might get a power-infusion for '84. And if what we've been told pans out to be true, that newfound power could be coming from a 250cc engine replacing the machine's current 125.

AFTER THE FACT

• In our Honda vs. Husqvarna Enduro Comparison Test in the June 1983 issue, we reported the Honda XR350R had no warranty. That is incorrect. The XR350R, like all Honda XR models, carries a 90-day warranty.

• American Honda wants to get in touch with all Gold Wing, Interstate and Honda touring bike riders. The reason is a product-update campaign the company has just announced, a program to replace (at no cost to eligible consumers) the existing Intercom/Component terminal in the Hondaline Type II audio system with an improved version. The new-version terminal, which replaces Honda part

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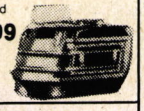

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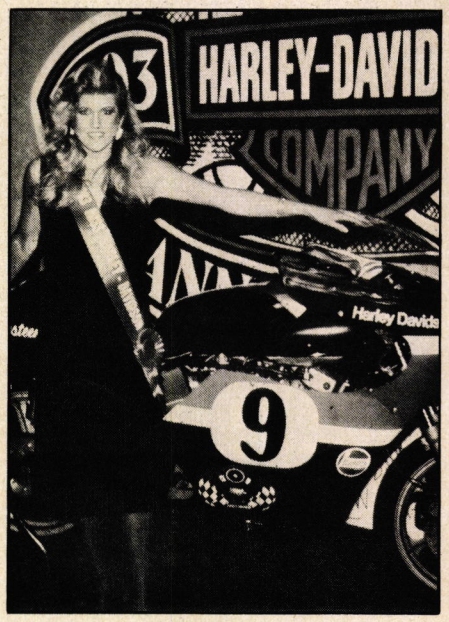
#1067941, offers increased output to the Hondaline headsets and an overall enhancement of the system's sound quality. The replacement program is being implemented through September 30, 1983, and Hondaline Type II-equipped riders are directed to contact local dealers, not American Honda, for the update.

APART FROM THE CROWD

• Harley-Davidson has found its girl. You'll remember that last year the company announced a nationwide search to find "Miss Harley-Davidson," promising to name the winner during the '83 Daytona Bike Week. Well, Regina Smith, of Clinton, Ohio gets the



A new XLX isn't enough for Miss Harley-D

She's already claimed the racer.

honors, having been chosen from among the six finalists. But the Ashland College theater arts major gets more than just honors; she gets an XLX-61 Sportster, too. No word on whether or not she'll ride her new bike to the various promotional functions she's scheduled for, though.

• And now it's come down to this. Repeated references to Harley-Davidson as "the sole remaining American motorcycle manufacturer" have rankled some people, most recently one Riley J. Snyder, of El Paso, Texas. According to Snyder, "Pardner, that ain't necessarily so." He goes on to tell about the Black Stallion Super Bronc II, manufactured by Carl Heald Inc., of Benton Harbor, Michigan. Snyder contends that the $630, Briggs & Stratton-powered minibike is a bona fide American motorcycle, no less of one than an 80-cubic-inch Harley-D. Which, of course, brings up the question of when the recently increased import tariffs for Japanese bikes

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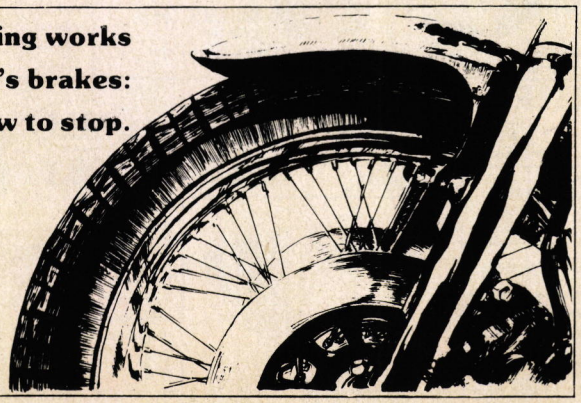

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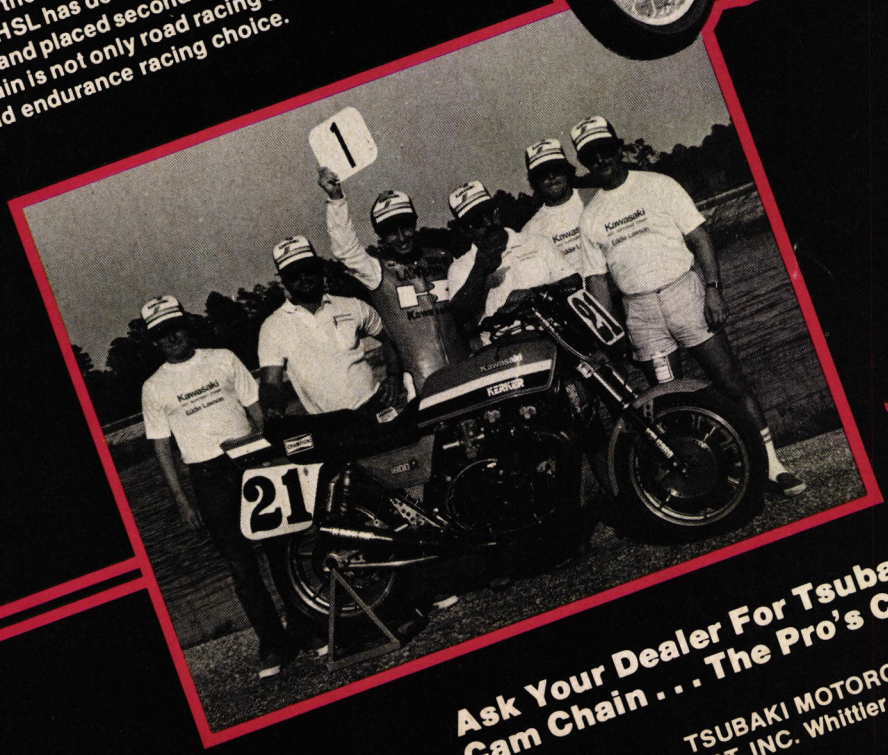

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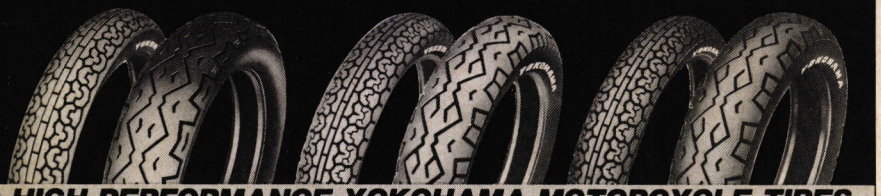
110/90V19 T/L	130/90V17 T/L	100/90-19 57H T/L	130/90-17 68H T/L	110/90-19 62H T/L	130/90-17 68H T/L
	120/90V18 T/L	110/90-19 62H T/L	120/90-18 65H T/L		130/90-18 69H T/L
	130/80V18 T/L		130/90-18 69H T/L		



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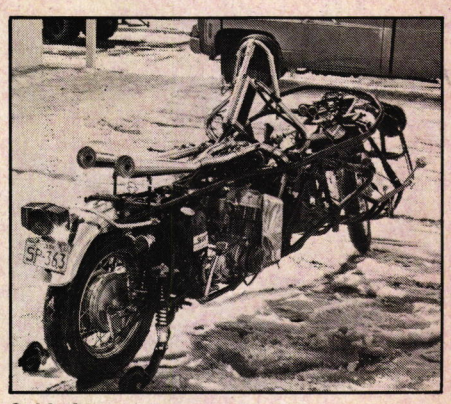
• But if Leo Rondeau, of Leisure Wheels in Saskatchewan, Canada, has his way, you can forget about *riding* motorcycles and start thinking about *piloting* them. Rondeau's one-off creation, shown here without its fiberglass bodywork, positions its rider/pilot inside a cage framework ahead of the CB750 Honda powerplant. The sensation, says Rondeau, is more like that of a high-performance jet aircraft than it is of a traditional motorcycle. But the machine's unique, twin-swingarm rear suspension, with collapsible outriggers, allows 45 degree lean-angles, keeping its rider rooted to the highways. But not to the gas stations; Rondeau claims 85-mpg figures at 65 mph.



Cabin fever can get ugly

As one Canadian's bike proves.

• If you log 100,000 miles on your BMW, perhaps you won't have as much trouble getting your medallion of certification as did Dr. Kent Perryman, of Simi Valley, California. BMW routinely awards the medallion to customers who can prove that they have actually traveled 100,000 miles on the German bike. In Perryman's case, though, it took a year-and-a-half campaign on his part, involving numerous letters and photos, to get that mileage medallion. Apparently, the problem stemmed from BMW's lack of precedent in giving the award to a dog; Perryman's wife had applied for the medallion in the name of the family pet. It seems that Sauron, the canine in question, makes the daily commute from Simi Valley into West Los Angeles right beside Dr. Perryman. And being as safety-minded as the next rider, Sauron wears a helmet, too.

• If you've ever had the misfortune of having to wear a hand-me-down helmet, you'll appreciate the predicament of the Bridgeville Pennsylvania police department and its single motorcycle helmet. That passed-around piece of safety equipment was so rank that one policeman, officer James Felt, refused motorcycle duty because he would have to wear it, and was suspended from the department for 15 days. But a judge in the town agreed with Felt and ordered that the officer be paid for the 15-day suspension. "That helmet," said Felt, "could have backed a cockroach into a corner." ●

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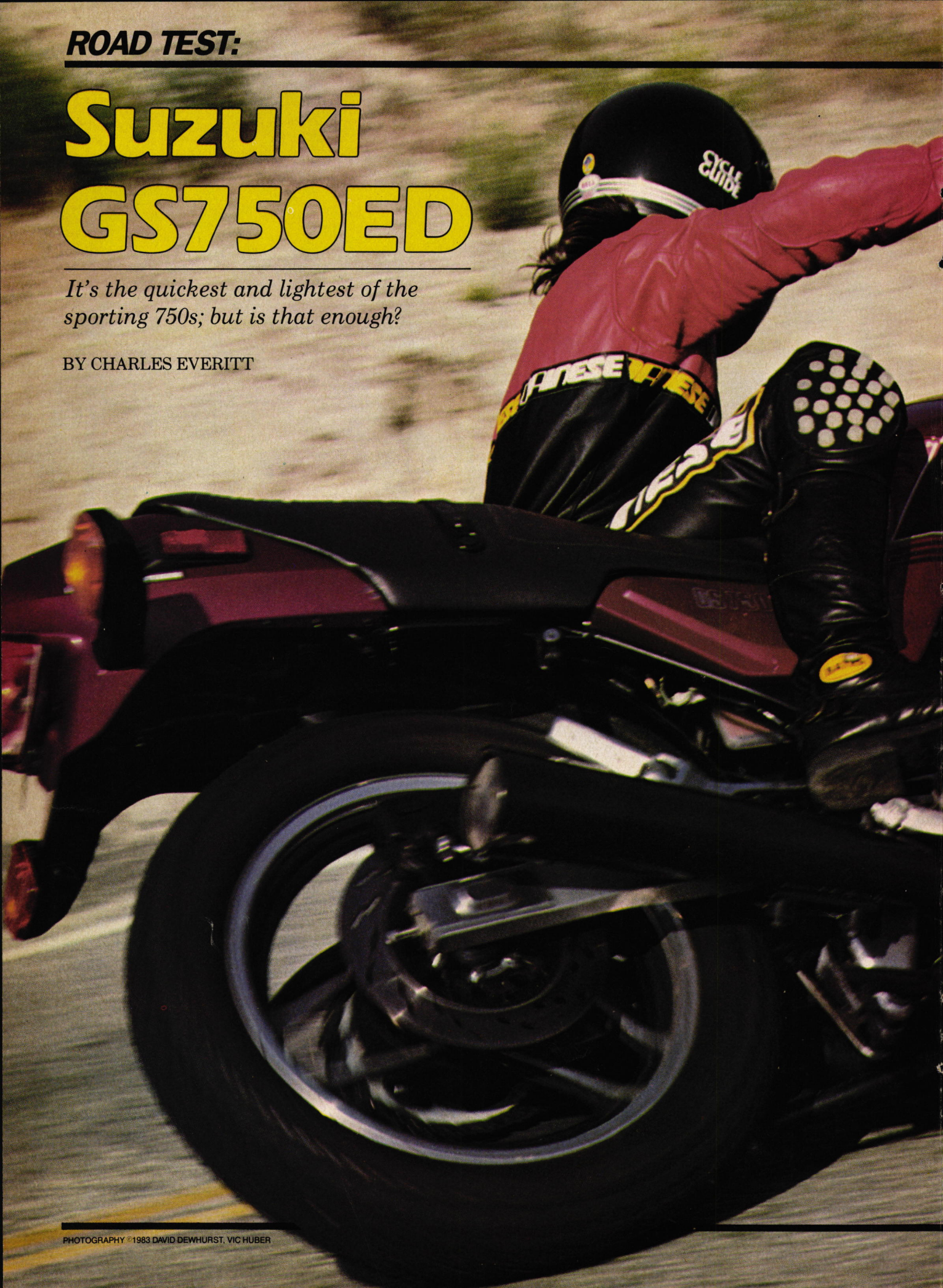
ROAD TEST:

Suzuki GS750ED

It's the quickest and lightest of the sporting 750s; but is that enough?

BY CHARLES EVERITT



PHOTOGRAPHY ©1983 DAVID DEWHURST, VIC HUBER

The ante just keeps going up in the sporting 750cc class. Used to be almost anyone could get in on the game, even with a multi-purpose motorcycle, but these days the players are a lot sharper and the stakes are much higher. You can't even get in the *door* unless you've got an engine capable of turning low-12- or high-11-second quarter-mile times, and it's shoehorned into a light, rigid chassis with an adjustable, single-shock rear suspension.

Well, Suzuki got in the door, slid up to the table and dealt itself in with the GS750ED, and while you could say the '83 GS-ED and its forebear, the GS750EZ, are cut from the same deck, they're as different as three of a kind and a full house. About the only things the two have in common are the DOHC transverse four-cylinder engine configuration, 16 valves and bore-and-stroke dimensions of 67.0mm by 53.0mm.

Suzuki's game strategy reflected GP roadracing experience and called for a lighter, more compact package, with special emphasis on performance and handling. So, the 3-year-old GS750ET/X/Z got tossed and new cards were drawn.

Consequently, Suzuki seems to hold a strong hand with the GS750ED. For 1983, the GS-ED is 11-second quick; moreover, its dragstrip times fractionally bettered those of Honda's Interceptor (May '83), the previous yardstick of straightline performance for unblown

Continued

750s. On top of that, the GS-ED has the obligatory rising-rate single-shock rear suspension, and at 485 pounds, it's the lightest player in the sporting 750 class: 13 pounds lighter than Kawasaki's '83 GPz750, 26 pounds lighter than the Interceptor and a whopping 34 pounds lighter than last year's GS750EZ.

That dramatic weight loss does more than provide the GS-ED with a svelte figure. The revamped engine's added horsepower can be put to better use instead of being soaked up by extra weight, and there's less avoirdupois to resist rider-input through the non-adjustable cast-aluminum handlebars. Indeed, other production 750s might steer as quickly as the GS-ED, but none can top it for making rapid, near-effortless transitions from one full-bank lean angle to the next.

According to Suzuki spokesmen, the new engine alone is 28.7 pounds lighter than the EZ's. Making an engine that much lighter wasn't simple, but it involved no magic. Rather, the engineers performed a computer-aided stress-analysis to ferret out the excess weight. Using a computer as a design tool isn't a new technique, but it's one Suzuki used to full advantage. And such a thorough weight-reduction program can be self-sustaining: Lighten one piece and it stresses the next one less, so it, too, can be lighter, and so on.

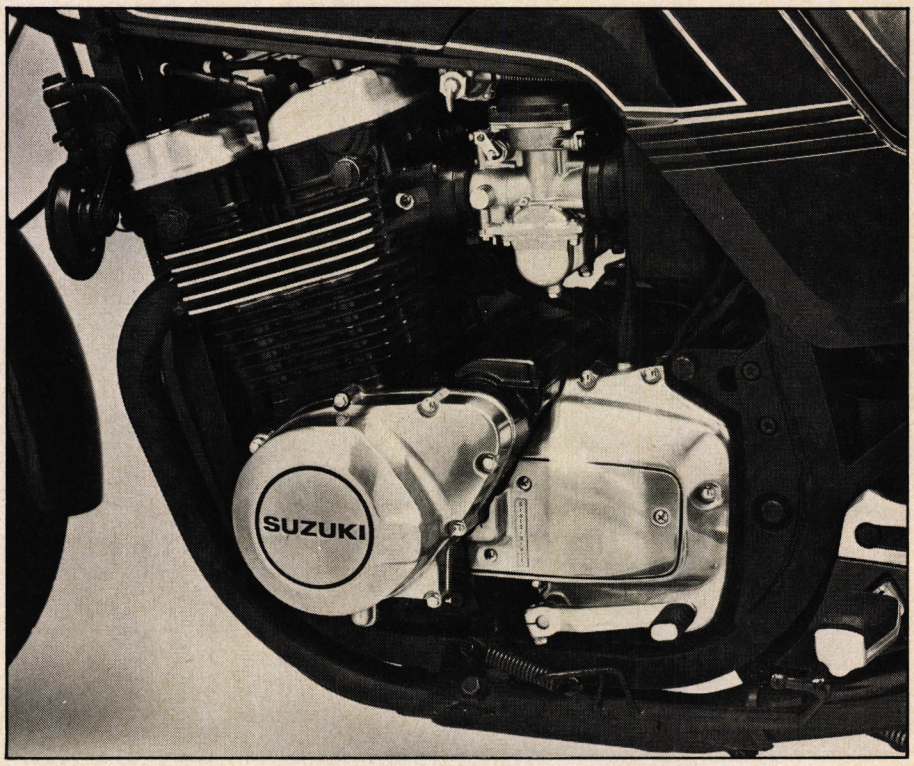
Slicing off weight is also akin to getting free horsepower, so the GS-ED's engine doesn't have to be tuned as radically for performance at the powerband's expense. And while the GS750ED's *is* peaky, it's not the least bit temperamental. In fact, the engine's tractability makes the GS-ED suitable even for commuter use, with clean, stumble-free carburetion, minimal driveline lash and smooth power delivery below 6000 rpm. Go past 6000 rpm, though, and the GS-ED reveals the more sporting side of its nature, revving quicker and pulling harder.

There are a few traits that undermine the GS's agreeableness, just the same. For instance, engine warm-up takes longer than with most other 750s, and the choke lever's position, directly beneath the horn button, complicates the procedure; adjusting the choke with thick-gloved hands frequently results in horn-honking. And whether the engine is hot or cold, the clutch is often grabby, with an inconsistent, if broad, engagement point. Some riders won't care for the engine's buzziness between 4500-5000 rpm.

But ride the GS-ED down a winding road and you might forgive the engine's shortcomings. Even though it takes a bit more concentration to keep the engine spinning above 6000 rpm, in its best-power zone, doing so will reward you with a satisfying lunge away from corners.

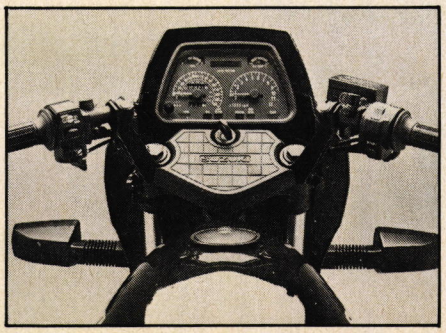
Less thrilling, perhaps, but no less important is Suzuki's zeal in lightening and downsizing the GS-ED's powerplant; almost nothing was left untouched. Starting at the lower end, the '83 ED has a forged, one-piece, plain-bearing crankshaft like the old 750's, but the counterweights are narrower and lighter, yet shaped to retain most of the old crank's flywheel effect. And in place of the old press-fit primary gear that required removable counterweights to install, the ED's helical primary gear is machined directly on the crank's outboard No. 3 counterweight. The ignition on the crank's right end has been tucked in better, with an electronic spark advancer instead of last year's wear-prone mechanical advancer; timing specs are the same, though. And despite efforts to make the engine as compact as possible, the generator—with a 35 percent increase in output over the EZ's—still lives on the left end of the crank. Sources at Suzuki say mounting the generator behind the cylinders wouldn't have been worth the added complexity. As it is, the ED's engine is still 20mm narrower than the EZ's.

Behind the crankshaft, a number of changes contribute to the ED engine's lighter weight and 25mm-shorter length. A primary ratio numerically lower than the EZ's spins the clutch and transmission gears faster, reducing the loads those pieces are subjected to. Consequently, Suzuki lightened the clutch, and, except for fourth, all the gear pairs are smaller and lighter, as are the shift forks. As an example of Suzuki's find-every-gram



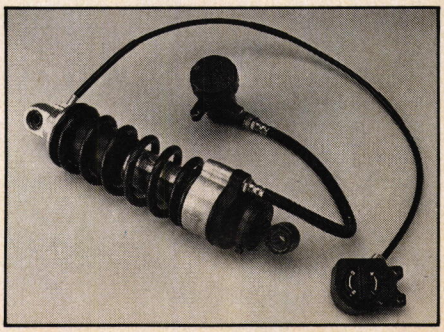
GS750ED's engine shows what a strict diet and weight training can do

Weight and bulk are down, but horsepower is up.



Moderate ergonomics broaden GS's appeal

For trips away from Racer Road.



Heim-jointed Showa shock, with adjusters

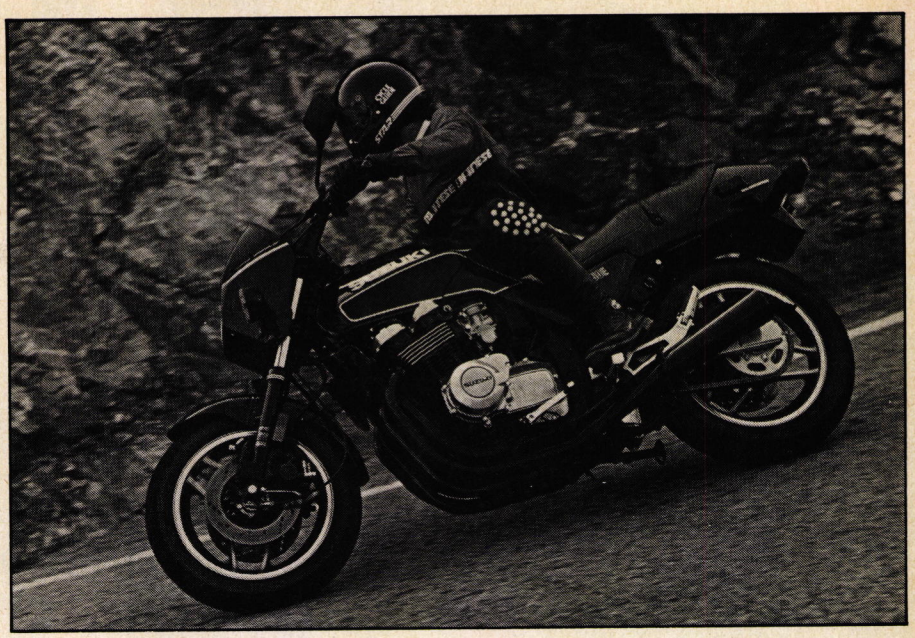
The flaw in the GS's handling package.

mentality, the EZ's rack-and-pinion clutch release was tossed for a lighter, pushrod-type mechanism.

More weight was carved from the engine by reducing the connecting rods' length by 10mm; at their big ends, however, the rods are 2mm wider than before. Shrinking the rods also allowed the cylinder to be shortened by one fin, and the remaining fins are thinner. That reduction in surface area pared off a tad more weight, but took some cooling capacity with it, which Suzuki restored by increasing oil-flow via a 6mm-deeper oil-pump rotor, and by fitting an oil cooler. Furthermore, four jets in the upper crankcase-half spritz oil onto the cylinder walls and the undersides of the E's shorter, lighter, cast pistons. It's a system similar to that used in Suzuki's XN85 Turbo motor, and employs a check-valve that restricts oil-flow to the jets at lower engine-rpm to prevent overcooling. The shorter cylinder, rods and pistons didn't reduce engine-height, however; the ED's engine is 5mm taller than the EZ's.

Those oil-cooled pistons have larger cut-outs to accommodate the sole source of ED motor's extra power: 2mm-larger intake valves and 1mm-larger exhaust valves. The bigger valves reduce combustion chamber volume, too, raising the compression ratio for the GS-ED from 9.4:1 to 9.6:1; the TSCC combustion chamber shapes are changed only to conform to the larger valves. Suzuki didn't shuffle cam timing, duration or valve lift for more power, either; those figures remain at EZ-levels. And the changes to the airbox (one-piece instead of EZ's two-piece), carburetors (removal of superfluous tabs and brackets) and exhaust system (smaller-diameter head pipes and shorter mufflers) were made to reduce weight only, according to Suzuki.

All the jiggery-pokery inside the engine might not have had much of an effect on the difference in power between the EZ and ED, but it certainly influenced the ED's chassis development. Because by reducing the engine's length by 25mm, Suzuki's engineers could position the engine further forward in the new frame, which in turn let them move the swingarm pivot 53mm forward and 19mm higher, compared to the EZ. That shortened the wheelbase slightly more than 1 inch, and *still* left room for the Full Floater rear suspension, in place of the EZ's dual shocks. The ED's frame itself has square-section downtubes, which Suzuki claims are stronger than the EZ's round ones, allowing the use of a smaller, thinner backbone tube. But only the ED's downtubes and two other rails supporting the back of the frame are square.



More than differences in tubing and wheelbase distinguish the two 750s' chassis, though. The ED has an obvious sporting bias, and equipment to match, like a 16-inch front wheel, and a Showa fork with bigger-diameter/thinner-wall stanchion tubes, more compression damping and dual-rate springs with a stiffer final rate than the EZ's. The ED also gets a fractionally steeper steering head angle (27.8 degrees versus the EZ's 28 degrees), and 9mm less trail, both of which combine with the smaller front wheel and shorter wheelbase to make the GS-ED quicker-steering than the EZ.

Modern 750cc sportbikes are expected to have a rising-rate single-shock rear suspension, as well, and the ED's is a single-strut version of Suzuki's Full Floater system, much like the GS550E's (June 1983 issue). It uses a single, centrally located strut to connect the swingarm to the rocker, instead of two outboard struts as on Suzuki's motocrossers and XN85. The ED's swingarm consists of welded-up aluminum extrusions, and the Showa shock offers four choices of rebound damping and a remote hydraulic preload-adjuster with infinite adjustability between its No. 1 and No. 5 settings. And except for the heim joints at the shock-eyes, every pivot point in the Full Floater rear end rides on needle bearings that are sealed for life.

Given the GS750ED's accomplishments—being the lightest and quickest in its class—and the modern, sporting emphasis behind its chassis development, you could easily believe the GS-ED would be just the ticket for a fast, hori-

Continued

COMPARATIVE TEST DATA:

Make and Model	Quarter-Mile, sec/mph	Top Speed, mph	Weight, lbs.	Stopping Distance From 60 mph,ft.
Suzuki GS750ED—'83	11.89/112.9	131	485	135
Honda V45 Interceptor—'83	11.96/111.6	138	511	116
Kawasaki GPz750—'83	12.16/109.2	134	498	136
Honda V45 Sabre—'83	12.17/111.1	128	514	130
Kawasaki KZ750-L3—'83	12.09/108.9	134	487	132
Suzuki GS750EZ—'82	12.01/109.1	127	519	127

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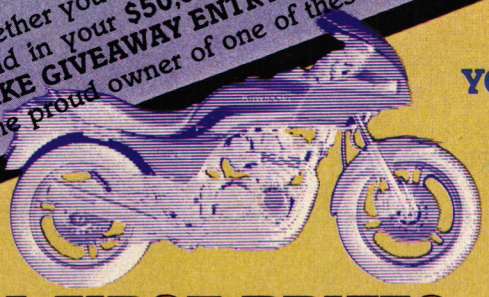

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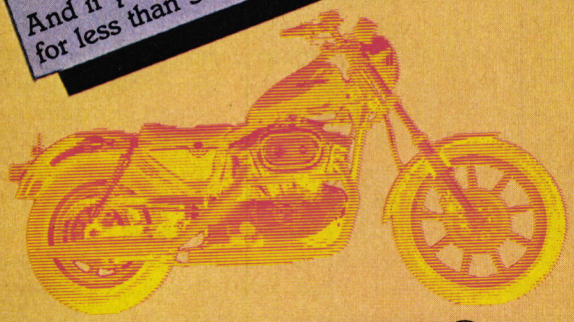

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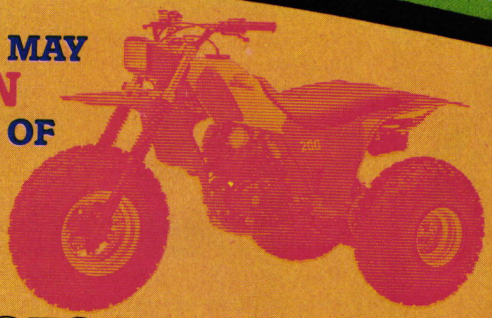

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A complete redesign brought Suzuki's 3-year-old 750 up to date

The emphasis was on lightness, engine performance and handling.

zon-tilting Sunday morning ride. And—in some cases—you'd be right. From the saddle, the GS feels short and top-light, and once you're moving, the instant steering-response makes it 550-agile. The chassis is extremely sensitive to any rider-movement, so quick direction changes become almost second nature, requiring only subtle control-inputs; in the tight stuff it can be flicked around like a toy. And the ED doesn't fight to stand up if the brakes are applied in mid-turn, so you can stay on them all the way to the corner's apex, and then take advantage of the engine's high-revving power for a quick exit. The GS-ED does exhibit a small amount of positive roll-steer, but that's a trait you have to be looking for to find.

The GS-ED displays its admirable cornering-behavior only within a narrow set of circumstances, though. At racing speeds in smooth corners, for example, the ED's rear end feels vague and imprecise, even with the suspension set on full-hard. And if the road surface is even *slightly* bumpy, that vagueness escalates into an unnerving wallow, both in fast and slow corners. Racetrack-testing also showed that the ED's sidestand bracket inhibits the left-side lean angle, and if the bracket hits hard enough, it levers the rear wheel right off the ground. But before that happens, the tires start slipping, even at a fast pace on the street.

Nor are the GS-ED's front brakes up to class standards. The EZ-style calipers, working on 15mm-smaller discs (to fit the 16-inch front wheel), lack feedback, and fade in hard use. And while the anti-dive units plumbed into the front brakes' hydraulics don't result in a spongy lever-feel, they don't affect front-end dive at all. Clamp on the binders and the ED's fork compresses like the anti-dive assemblies weren't even there.

Dial both your intensity-level and the suspension back down, though, and the GS-ED shows better manners. The same agility and quick steering that make short work of smooth, twisty backroads do likewise for in-town maneuvering, and while the ride is on the firm side, the suspension does a good job of protecting the rider from most road irregularities. Small, sharp bumps are beneath the rear shock's notice, though, even at its full-soft setting, which diminishes some of the GS-ED's all-around appeal. That's made up for, in part, by surprisingly moderate—for a sportbike—ergonomics. The seating position places a rider fairly upright in the soft saddle's narrow pocket, and the bars come back far enough to prevent overloading of wrists and shoulders. Still, most sporting riders will prefer bars with less sweep-back.

But sporting riders will want more rear-shock rebound damping and better tires, too. That leaves the GS750ED in a gray, middle area; it's not specialized or versatile enough to completely satisfy riders at either end of the spectrum. It *does* offer speed and agility in a light-weight package, with modern execution of a traditional engine configuration. But in the high-stakes sporting 750 game, the GS750ED's bid comes up short. •

Ride Review

• Two years ago we picked the GS750E as the best street 750 money could buy. It was fast, comfortable and incredibly versatile. The '82 model added a hotter engine—and a 12.01-second quarter—making it the fastest 750 we'd ever tested, up to the '83 Interceptor. For Suzuki to follow its own act, this year's E-type would have to be even faster and more versatile.

It is . . . and it isn't. The '83 E-model's 11.89-second quarter *is* blisteringly fast. But as far as versatility, this E falls short. Push it hard on some fast swervery and you'll find its limits early, just as a short stretch of Superslab will show that this E doesn't care much for touring, either. Call me a curmudgeon if you must, but I find this new and improved version to be mostly new, not improved. —*Larry Works*

• Even though it's been completely changed, and it's now based on an all-new frame and powered by a completely redesigned engine, I see this 750E as one of the last surviving all-around sportbikes. And I like it. For me, a 750 always has been the perfect high-performance, go-anywhere sporting machine. Call it a GT bike. And the Suzuki fits that description the closest.

Maybe it won't handle a racetrack as well as the Interceptor or GPz, but that doesn't bother me in the least. You'd be surprised how rarely I put on full leathers and mount a set of slicks for my street riding. And that's what the 750E is, a high-performance streetbike. And it's one of the few with a riding position that won't have me scouring phonebooks for the nearest chiropractor when I'm only two counties away on a long-weekend ride. —*Joe Kress*

• There ought to be some sort of lobby to look after the rights of tall motorcyclists, because we're being seriously discriminated against by most of today's midsize motorcycles. Take this Suzuki GS750, for example. I would hardly call a 750cc street-strafer a little machine, but if anyone more than 6 feet tall swings a leg over the GS, he's going to feel like the Jolly Green Giant trying to fit into Kenny Roberts' racing leathers. My knees overshoot the indentations on the tank, and when I tuck in, I find my head is protecting the fairing from wind rather nicely. I just can't help getting the feeling that I'm riding a skateboard with footpegs and handlebars.

I know that the GS has a great motor and that it steers precisely, but when I go looking for a good 750, I'm afraid that I'll look right over the top of the Suzuki. —*Ron Lawson*

CYCLE GUIDE SPECIFICATIONS

Suzuki GS750ED — street

IMPORTER: U.S. Suzuki Motor Corporation, 3251 East Imperial Highway, Brea, California 92621

SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE: $3348

ENGINE

Type . . . . . four-stroke transverse vertical four
Valve arrangement . . . . . double overhead camshafts, four valves per cylinder
Bore and stroke . . . . . 67.0mm x 53.0mm
Displacement 747.4cc
Compression ratio 9.6:1
Engine redline . . . . . 10,000 rpm
Carburetion . . . . . four 32mm Mikuni constant-vacuum
Air filter . . . . . washable oiled foam element
Lubrication . . . . . wet sump
Starting system . . . . . electric only
Ignition . . . . . transistorized breakerless
Charging system . . . . . 12-volt; 310-watt alternator, voltage regulator/rectifier, 14-ampere-hour battery

DRIVETRAIN

Primary drive . . . . . helical gears; 1.896:1 ratio
Clutch . . . . . wet, multi-plate
Final drive . . . . . #530 O-ring chain (5/8-in. pitch, 3/8-in. width); 3.071:1 (43/14) ratio

Gear	Internal gear ratio	Overall gear ratio	MPH per 1000 RPM
I	2.500	14.557	5.02
II	1.750	10.190	7.17
III	1.368	7.968	9.18
IV	1.130	6.582	11.11
V	0.957	5.570	13.13

SUSPENSION/WHEEL TRAVEL

Front . . . Showa air-spring, 37mm stanchion tube diameter, brake-actuated hydraulic anti-dive/ 5.6 in. (141 mm)
Rear . . . . . single Showa shock, 4-position adjustable rebound damping, 11mm spring preload range/ 4.3 in. (110mm)

BRAKES

Front . . . . . dual single-action hydraulic calipers, 10.2-in. (260mm) effective disc diameter
Rear . . . . . double-action hydraulic caliper, 10.2-in. (260mm) effective disc diameter

TIRES

Front . . . . . 100/90-16 54H Bridgestone Mag-Mopus L303 tubeless
Rear . . . . . 120/90-17 64H Bridgestone Mag-Mopus G514 tubeless

DIMENSIONS AND CAPACITIES

Weight . . . . . 485 lbs. (219.9kg)
Weight distribution . . . . . 48.4% front, 51.6% rear
Gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) . . . . . 990 lbs. (449kg)
Load capacity (with full fuel tank) . . . . . 473 lbs. (215kg)
Wheelbase . . . . . 58.2 to 59.3 in. (1479 to 1507mm)
Seat height . . . . . 32.1 in. (815mm)
Handlebar width . . . . . 26.6 in. (675mm)
Footpeg height . . . . . 13.6 in. (345mm)
Ground clearance . . . . . 6.2 in. (157mm), at exhaust header pipes
Steering head angle . . . . . 27.8 degrees from vertical
Front wheel trail . . . . . 4.13 in. (105mm)
Frame . . . . . tubular and square-section mild steel, double front downtubes
Oil capacity . . . . . 3.4 qt. (3.2/)
Fuel tank . . . . . steel, 5.2 gal. (19.5/), including 1.1 gal. (4.0/) reserve
Instrumentation . . . . . speedometer, odometer, tripmeter resettable to zero, fuel gauge, oil-temperature gauge, digital gear indicator

PERFORMANCE

Fuel consumption range . . . . 35 to 50 mpg (15 to 21 km/l)
Average fuel consumption . . . . . 40 mpg (17 km/l)
Cruising range, maximum . . . . . 182 to 260 miles (293 to 418km)
Cruising range, reserve only . . . 39 to 55 miles (63 to 88km)
Speedometer error, 30 mph indicated . . . . . 30 mph actual
Speedometer error, 55 mph indicated . . . . . 53 mph actual
Best 1/4-mile acceleration . . . . 11.893 sec., 112.92 mph (182 km/h)
Top speed (calculated at redline) . . . . 131 mph (211 km/h)
Stopping distance from 30 mph . . . . . 29 ft. (8.8m)
Stopping distance from 60 mph . . . . . 135 ft. (41.1m)

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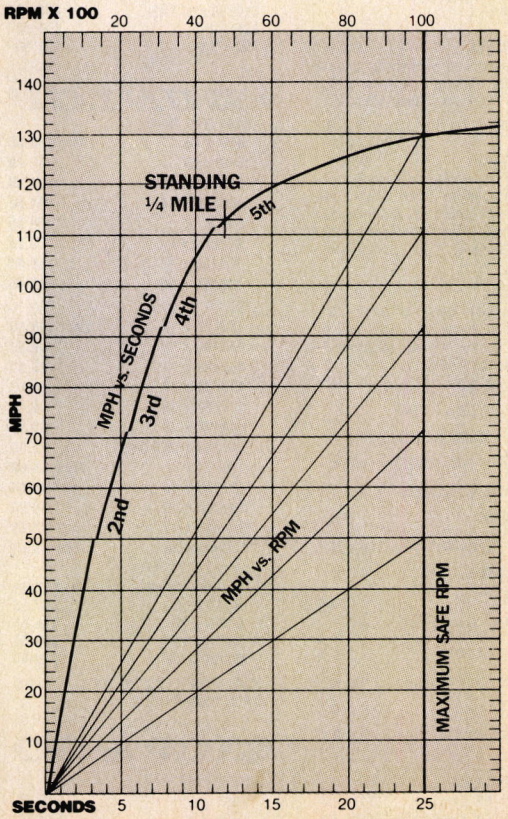

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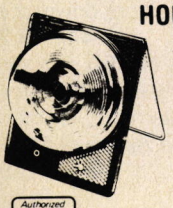

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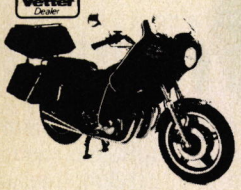

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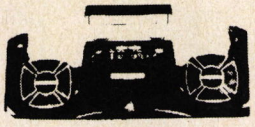

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FOX
YAMAHA

TRAIL TEST:

Yamaha TT600

Yamaha finishes a great starting point.

BY RON LAWSON

PHOTOGRAPHY © 1983 DAVID DEWHURST

Bikes like the Yamaha TT600 are the paint-by-number motorcycles of the dirt realm—no two riders see them in quite the same color, so each machine tends to take on the personality of its owner.

And the personalities that the new TT will take on promise to be diverse. The hardcore band of thumper crazies that Yamaha left motorcycleless when the TT500 was discontinued already has plans for coloring the 600 a more radical shade of stock. The motor will be stripped, stroked, ported and polished, then dropped into an oversuspended, underweight MX frame. That's because thumper crazies see the 600 as little more than a starting point on the road to building the meanest dirt-digger ever to use trailriding as an excuse for landscape reconfiguration.

At the other end of the TT600's buyer spectrum are those who see it as the answer to their leisure-riding dreams—a big thumper that promises to be manageable enough for a beginner, yet still powerful enough to allow that beginner to develop into a more experienced rider. But the TT600 might surprise both extremes, because the machine's chassis and suspension aren't as effective as the playriders might have expected, and the engine is even more potent than the hardcore four-stroke fans hoped.

Indeed, the motor is potent enough to catch the attention of any thumper devotee, because this machine is the most powerful four-stroke dirtbike ever to roll off an assembly line. And that's not just in peak horsepower, either, but in ground-rumbling low-end torque, as well. The 600 starts churning out surprising levels of power at low rpm, then progresses quickly and smoothly to a peak many two-strokes would be proud of. That peak does come early, though, as with most four-strokes. The TT is a thoroughbred thumper with all of the characteristics common to thumpers, only magnified. It has more displacement, more power and more engine-braking than any other production four-stroke.

And, of course, those characteristics add up to a machine that can put any rider in wheelie heaven. The front end will come up anytime, in any gear and at any speed. At first, you'll look for excuses to lift the front wheel: long uphills or perhaps an onlooker to impress. But soon you won't even need an excuse; you'll start doing wheelies just for the fun of it.

One reason that mono-wheeling on the TT is so inviting is the smoothness of the engine. When you lug the machine down into the low-rpm ranges, each power pulse isn't a violent quake that sends aftershocks through the entire bike, as with most big singles. Instead, the engine produces smooth, consistent power. This is

Continued

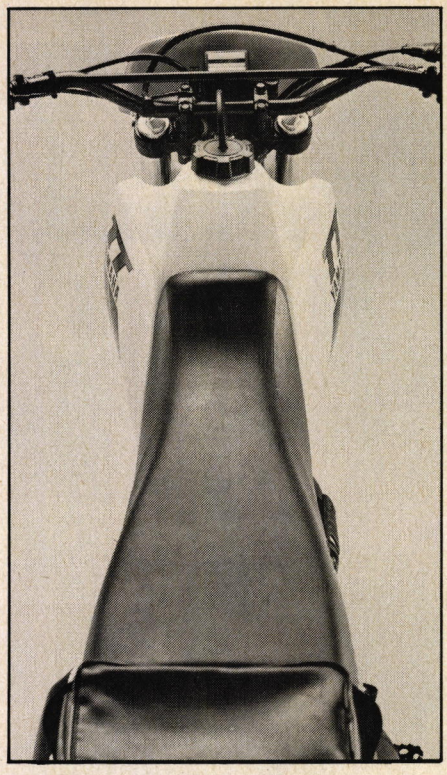
due, in part, to a gear-driven counterbalancer Yamaha has placed directly behind the cylinder. It does an impressive job of smoothing the powerband, but at the cost of several pounds of extra weight.

That weight has to be compensated for elsewhere, so Yamaha went through the motor in an attempt to toss out as many pounds as possible. Yamaha claims that the 600 motor is about 10 pounds lighter than the XT550 powerplant from which it was derived.

One place that lost weight on the TT is the crankshaft, which has a hollow center. More weight was lost by manufacturing the kickstart lever from aluminum, and the clutch has been made lighter by removing teeth from the driven plates. Unlike the dual-purpose XT, the TT600 has no charging system and it doesn't need as much flywheel inertia, so more weight was stripped from the magneto rotor. Other weight-reducing tricks are more radical, like the use of an aluminum cylinder sleeve. The inside of the liner has been chromed to withstand the wear and heat of the engine, but that also means that the barrel can't be rebored—if you seize it, you buy a new liner.

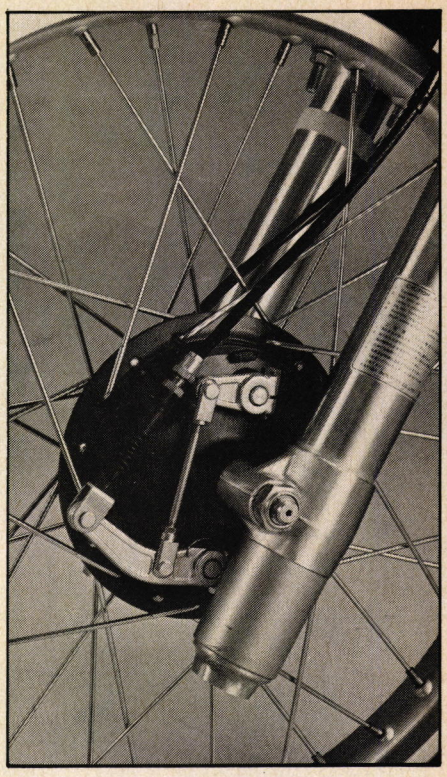
Another inconvenience of the 600, although more physical than financial, is that the machine has no manual compression release. Instead, it has a kickstarter-actuated mechanism that partially opens the exhaust valve during the first quarter of the kick-lever stroke. But that contrivance isn't enough, because this TT is extremely difficult to start. It requires a powerful kick, and if it doesn't light up in the first two or three strokes, chances are you're going to have to give your right leg a long rest before trying again. Without a manual compression release, you don't have the option of cleaning-out a loaded-up engine by holding the release and just kicking it through. And bump-starting the big single is totally impractical.

Other differences between the XT and the TT are purely performance-oriented. The cam has longer duration, and the exhaust valves on the TT are 1mm larger in diameter, at 31mm. Both the XT550 and the TT600 use twin carburetors, a design dubbed the Yamaha Duo Intake System (YDIS). The two systems aren't identical, however, since the 600's primary carburetor is larger than the 550's, and both of the TT's carbs are constructed of a lighter metal. The primary carb is a 26mm slide/needle type that is linked mechanically to a 27mm constant-vacuum carb. In the first one-third of twistgrip rotation, only the primary carb



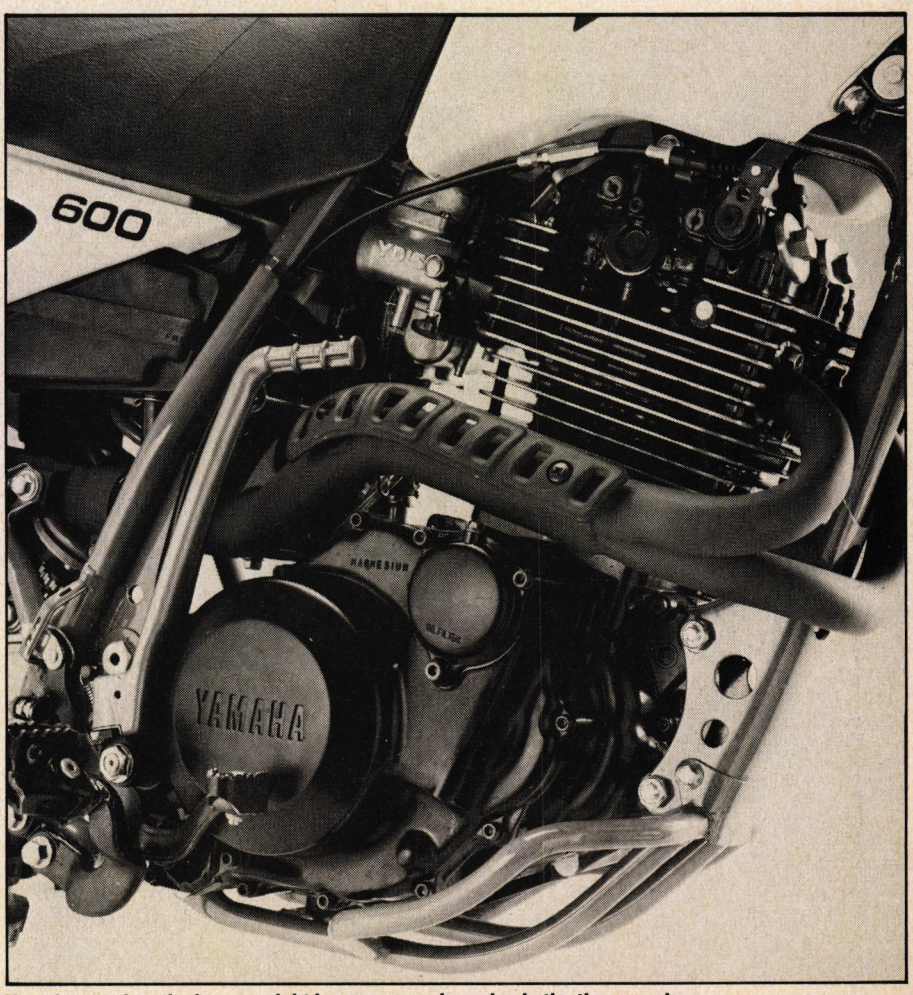
TT saddle from a rider's-eye view

Take a ride on the tall side.



Twin-leading-shoe front brake

Now standard dirt equipment.



Yamaha now has the heavyweight horsepower-champion in the thumper ring

With a CV carb and four valves, the TT promises to win by technical knockout.

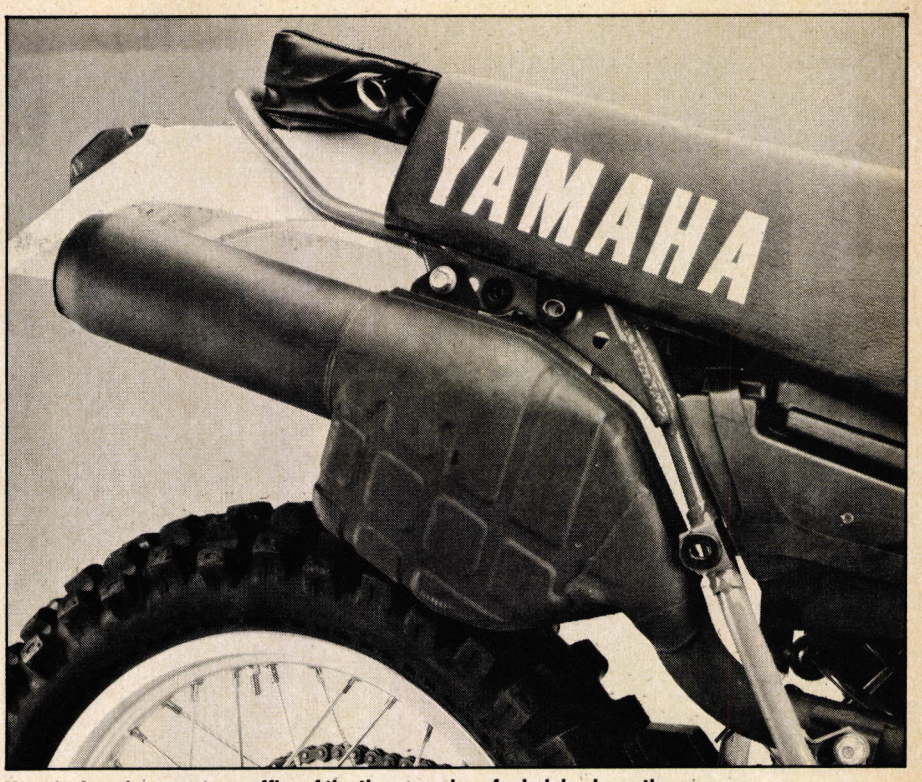
is feeding the engine. Beyond that point, however, a mechanical linkage opens the CV's butterfly valve and the two carburetors work in conjunction through the mid- and upper-rpm range. The theory behind the system is that small-bore carbs provide better atomization of fuel but can't provide enough volume to feed a large engine at high rpm. So the logical solution is two small-venturi carbs.

But that twin-carburetor system contributes still more weight, and every ounce adds up. The TT600, with no fuel and a full oil tank weighs 280 pounds, almost 10 pounds heavier than the original TT500 that was introduced in the mid-Seventies. And on the 600, the location of weight is just as harmful as its amount. The machine feels top-heavy, and just a glance at the shapes of the TT will tell you why. The two areas where weight is most concentrated on any dirtbike are the engine and the fuel tank. And in both cases, the shapes on the TT contribute to a high center of gravity. The engine is taller than it is long, and most of the fuel is carried high on the frame. The fuel-tank shape actually was dictated by styling priorities rather than engineering objectives, and the machine looks and feels heavier than it really is. Yamaha did make some efforts to keep the weight low in the TT's chassis, though. The oil tank is located just above the swingarm pivot, and the shock linkage is lower in the frame than was the case on previous Monocross rear suspension systems. Overall, however, the TT is still a very heavy handful.

Whenever you get into slow situations, it becomes clear that the TT divides its loyalty between two masters: its rider and gravity. If you try to turn on a steep downhill, gravity steps in and takes over, so you'll probably just keep going straight down. It's the same story when you lean the TT over or try to flick it through a tight section of trees. The bike takes any excuse to remind you that it's no featherweight.

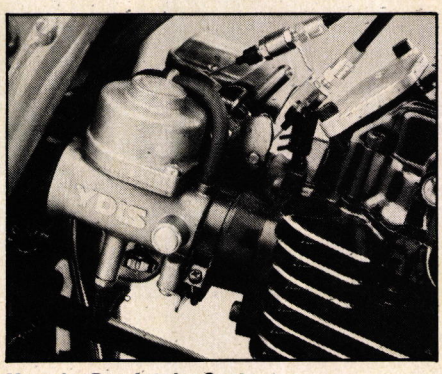
The problem is compounded by the suspension, which is soft at both ends. Whenever the rider grabs a handful of brakes, he had better be prepared for the rear end to extend and the front fork to compress so rapidly and to such an extent that any downhill will seem twice as steep as it really is.

In the rear, the problem can be traced to an underdamped and undersprung rear shock that runs from just under the seat/tank junction to a linkage attaching to the swingarm. That linkage is similar to the system on the IT490, and is de-



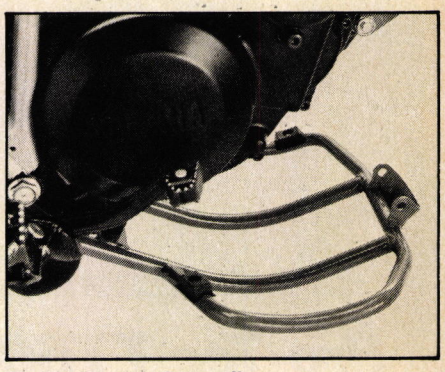
Yamaha has the monster muffler of the thumper class for helping keep the peace

It might be heavy in appearance, but it's quite light in sound.



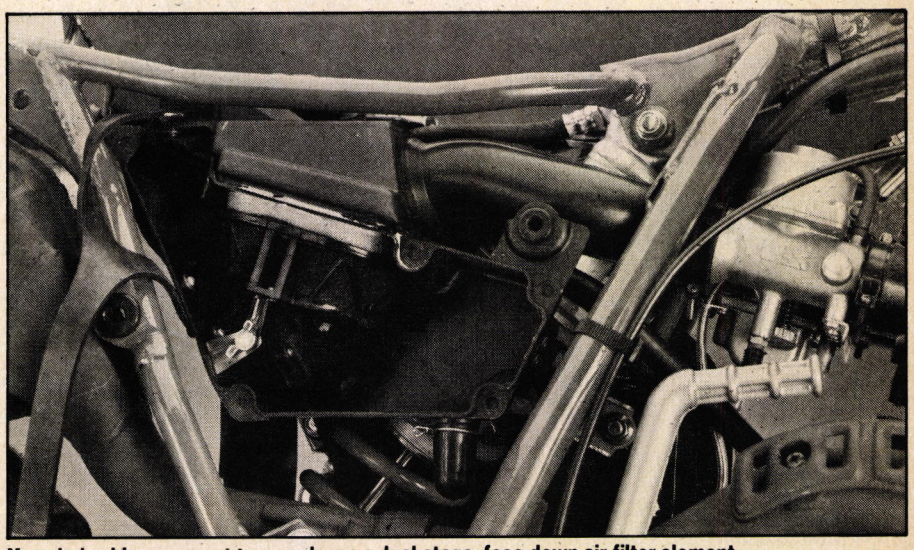
Yamaha Duo Intake System

It takes two carbs to feed the single.



Engine bar unbolts easily

But there's a case for leaving it on.



Yamaha's side-access airbox encloses a dual-stage, face-down air-filter element

For breathing more air and less water when the going gets a little wet.

Continued

PHOTOGRAPHY© 1983 DAVID DEWHURST

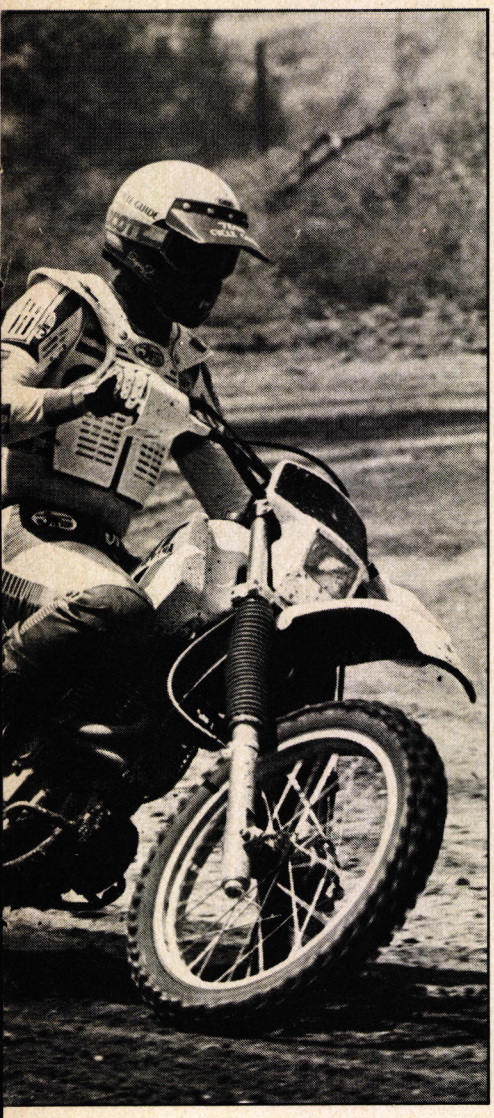
Pro-Tec TT600: Proving the Big-Bang Theory

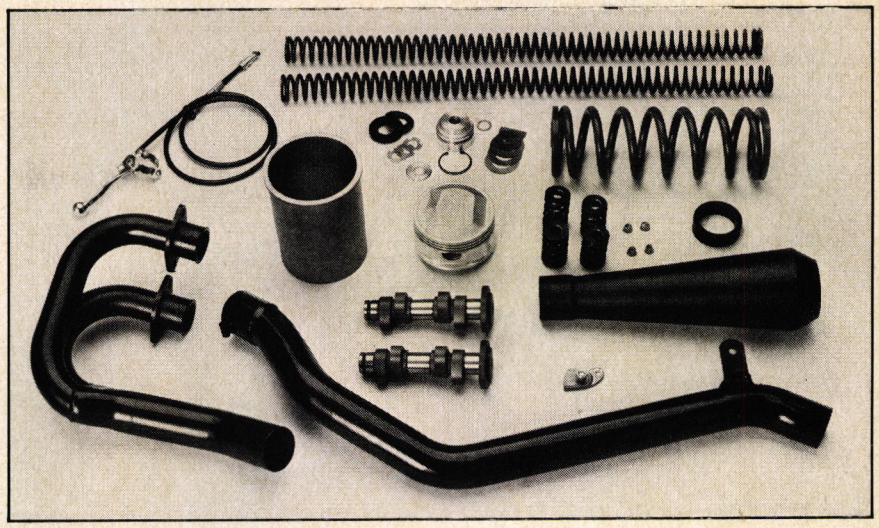
• It was a foregone conclusion that someone would do it; the only question was *who*? Who would be the first to take a TT600—a megathumper that already rocks seismographs all across the state every time it fires—and modify it to pack an even mightier wallop?

Well, the wait for the TT's knockout punch is over. The first TT600 hot-rodder is Skip Clark, owner of Pro-Tec Inc., in Brea, California. But that's not such a big surprise, really, since Clark's company is renowned for its aftermarket performance equipment for the 600's predecessor, the TT500. In fact, TT500-based racebikes built and sponsored by Pro-Tec have won almost every four-stroke national championship motocross event held since 1978. So when Clark invited us to test-ride a TT600 outfitted with the very first hop-up goodies available anywhere for the bike, it was an offer we couldn't refuse.

Clark's main objective was to give the already potent 600 more power, a process he began by fitting a higher-lift cam, stiffer valve springs and a 10.5:1 piston. The entire original exhaust system went away in favor of a freer-breathing arrangement that uses larger-diameter pipes and a 12-inch megaphone—and which is about 5 pounds lighter. Intake breathing was improved, as well, through the insertion of four 1-inch-diameter vents in the side of the airbox. And to lower the degree of difficulty involved in prodding this higher-compression motor into life, the kickstarter-actuated compression release was traded for a traditional hand-operated type.

That proved a wise decision, for the magnitude of the Pro-Tec engine's thumps is indeed significantly greater. Clark claims an 11-horsepower increase over the stocker, and nothing we experienced on his bike argues to the contrary. Amazingly, though, the modified motor has every bit as much bottom-end lugging power as the stock one, a point we conclusively proved through a series of roll-on contests between the two from just above idling rpm. They always ran dead-even—until, that is, about halfway through the rpm range, where Clark's bike would gradually start pulling ahead. And as the revs climbed further, the Pro-Tec bike would flat run away from the stocker. That was because Clark's modifications not only yielded more torque, they also added between 500 and 570 useful rpm on top. Consequently, we could ride his bike notice-





It was just a question of who would be the first to tackle the Yamaha TT600

Pro-Tec already has an answer that ranges from shock springs to steel sleeves.

© 1983 GILBERT LUNA

ably faster without having to shift quite as often as on the stocker, either on the racetrack or during fast cowtrailing.

To complement the hot-rodded engine, Clark also delved into the chassis. The front fork got stiffer springs (21-pound rating vs. the 16-pound stockers) contained beneath preload spacers shortened by 5/8-inch. The rear shock received a 290-pound spring (replacing the 245-pound original) and increased compression damping through different valving in the shock. Clark also removed the odometer and replaced the headlight with a plain numberplate.

Along with the lighter exhaust, those last two changes netted a total weight reduction of only 8 pounds (from the stocker's 280-pound weight), but it's a difference we could feel. More important, though, was the improvement in handling offered by the reworked suspension. It helped the bike to steer more crisply, track straighter, bottom-out much less often and inspire a considerably higher level of rider-confidence. The Pro-Tec bike even slowed down more controllably, since the firmer suspension greatly reduced the amount of forward pitching that bothered the stocker when braking hard. We felt the modified rear shock was a bit overdamped on its compression stroke, however, and still a bit undersprung, since it didn't respond as quickly to small chops and stutter-bumps as the stock arrangement did—a problem that Clark promises to remedy. But in every other way, the Pro-Tec suspension was far superior.

Overall, in fact, the entire machine was superior to the stocker, whether used for motocross or just as an all-around playbike. And all of the items we sampled are now on Pro-Tec's parts shelves, along with several we didn't try firsthand. The cam in the bike we rode, for example, is tuned to boost low-end and midrange power, but Pro-Tec also offers a midrange/top-end cam (recommended for racing only) for the 600. In addition, there's both an aluminum muffler/spark arrestor or a SuperTrapp silencer (rather than the noisy, non-U.S.-Forest-Service-approved megaphone) for trailriding. And those bemoaning Yamaha's use of an unboreable chromed-aluminum cylinder liner in the 600 will be pleased to learn that Pro-Tec is selling two cast-iron replacement liners. One is stock-sized and allows overbores up to .040-inch, and the other is a larger liner that will accept a 98mm piston Pro-Tec will soon make available to boost displacement to 633.6cc.

The latter option proves Clark fully understands the hot-rod mentality that prevails among big-bore thumper riders: No matter how ridiculously big or outrageously powerful an engine already is, make it even bigger and more powerful yet, even if you have to move heaven and earth to do so. Well, we don't know about heaven; but when it comes to moving—and shaking—earth, Pro-Tec's TT600 has few peers. —*Paul Dean*

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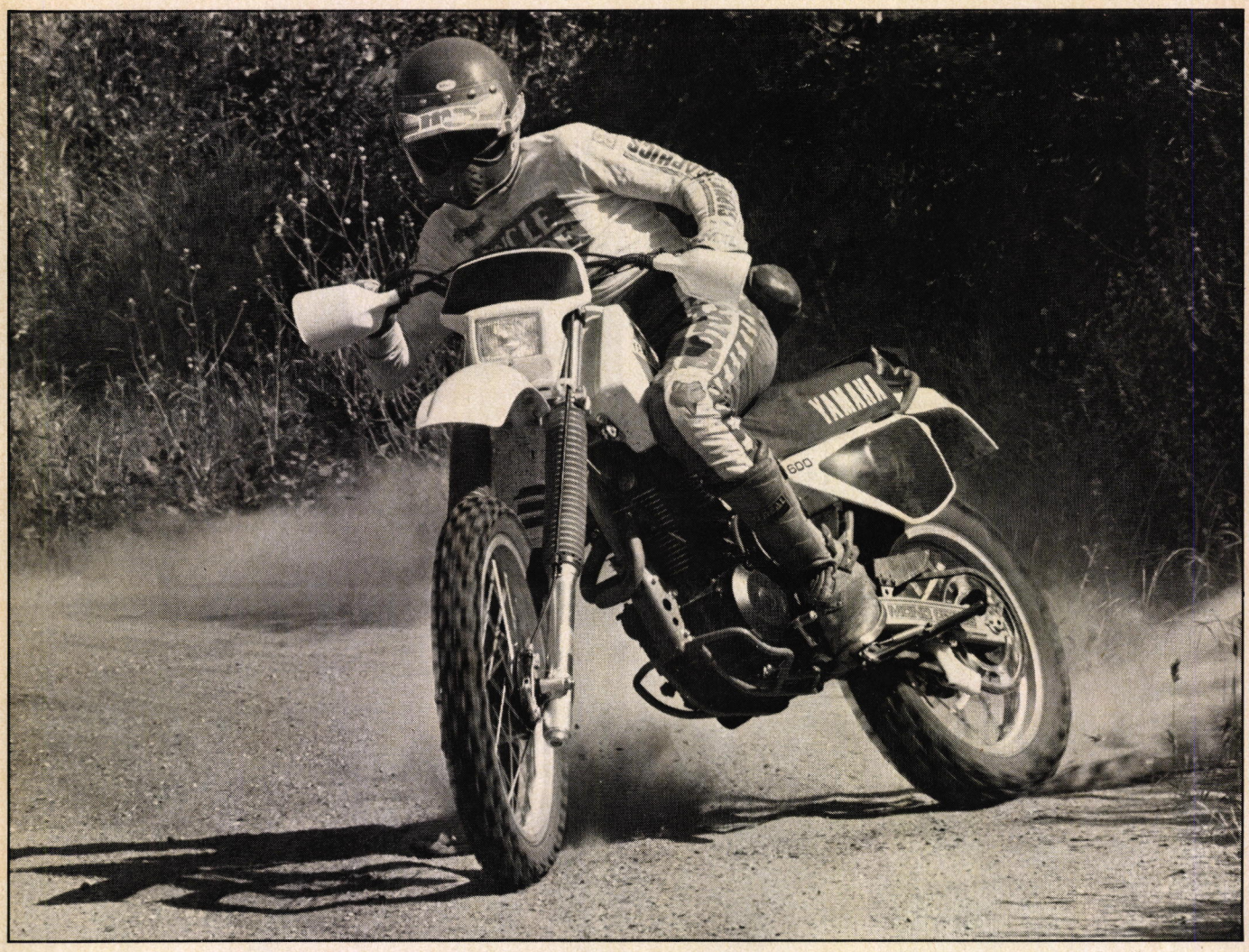


Special of the day on the Yamaha TT600's menu of high-speed dirt-riding tricks is the any-gear full-lock slide

On a fast fireroad, this bike will serve up a portion of dust and rocks to any other four- or two-stroke dirt bike.

signed to progressively increase spring and damping rates, so the rear suspension should be soft enough to absorb small bumps without excessive bottoming on large impacts. In practice, though, the spring is so soft that even small whoops come close to using all that travel. Both spring preload and rebound damping are adjustable on the Yamaha-made shock, but these measures are insufficient; what the bike really needs is a stiffer spring.

The fork is just as soft as the rear end. It bottoms easily and dives whenever the machine slows rapidly. Again, suspension-tuning will provide a half-cure, but increasing oil level and viscosity will only go so far; then the rider will have to go to a stiffer spring. The fork is a refugee from the IT490, and already uses a spring with the same rate as the IT's optional stiff spring. Yamaha currently doesn't have anything stiffer available, but the company claims to have optional springs on the way, and already there are aftermarket springs to be found.

In addition to providing the suspension basics, the IT490 also served as a model for the chassis dimensions of the TT. Wheelbase, rake and trail all are nearly identical on the two machines. Despite that, though, the TT600 has a cornering personality all its own. As long as

COMPARATIVE TEST DATA:

Make and Model	Wheel Travel Front/Rear, in.	Weight (fuel tank empty), lb.	Weight Bias, Front/ Rear, percent	Steering Head Angle/ Trail, degrees/inches	Transmission, number of speeds
Yamaha TT600-'83	11.7/10.8	280	45.0/55.0	28.0/4.6	5
Can-Am Sonic MX-'83	11.6/12.1	272	47.4/52.6	28.0/4.2	5
Honda XR350R-'83	10.9/10.4	253	47.3/52.7	26.0/3.9	6
Husqvarna 430WR-'83	10.4/10.6	246	47.0/53.0	30.0/6.0	6
Maico 490 E-'83	11.9/12.6	261	46.4/53.6	27.5/4.6	5
Honda XR500R-'82	9.5/10.0	289	44.3/55.7	28.0/4.4	5

the turn is reasonably smooth and flat, the TT's front wheel will stay where it's put. This allows the 600 to excel in broad sweepers and even in tight turns where traction is hard to find. Engine-braking must take some of the credit here, because when you roll off the throttle, the transition from acceleration to deceleration compresses the soft front end, placing more weight on the front wheel and converting the machine into an instant corner-carver.

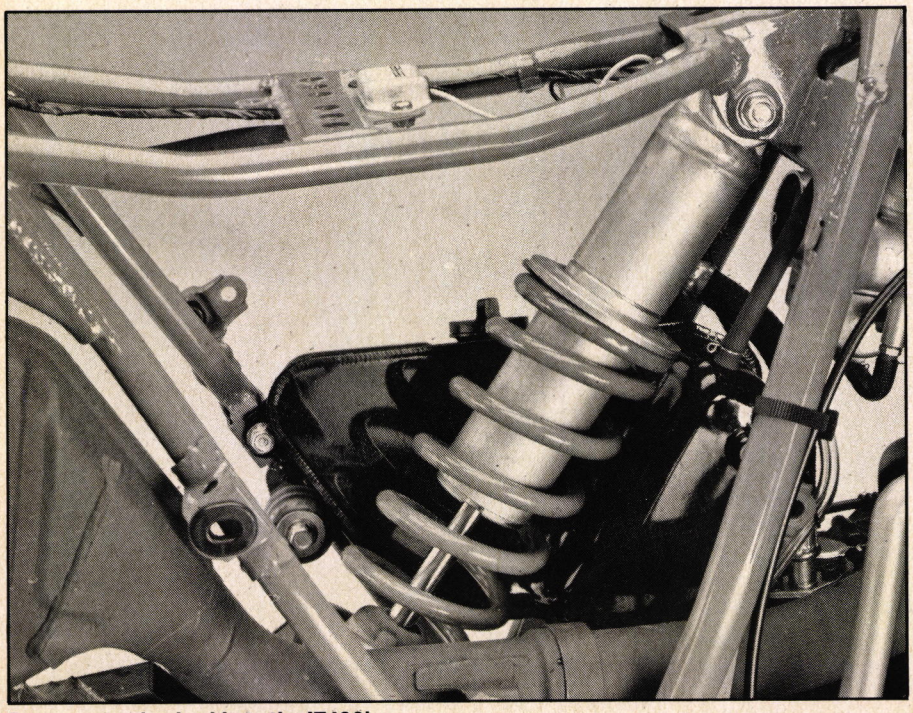
Even when the TT isn't on the brakes it's a quick-steering motorcycle. The bike always reacts quickly to rider input—sometimes too quickly for such a heavy machine. On tight trails it can sometimes be difficult to hold that 280 pounds of motorcycle in a straight line. And there also is an annoying front-end nod at high-speed. That's the natural result of combining soft suspension with quick steering and too much weight.

What do those factors add up to on the trail? That depends on both the rider and the trail. If the terrain is wide-open, with smooth fireroads and broad turns, the TT will fit right in. It has the power to do almost anything a rider could ask, from breaking the rear end loose into a full-lock slide, to punching down the straights with enough acceleration to make any other production four-stroke look silly by comparison. And the TT will do all that with an exhaust note so quiet that you won't even hear the machine over the sound of your own teeth clenching. But if the TT finds itself on a tight trail with a rider who expects enduro-level performance, it'll be in over its head. There's no getting around the fact that a stock TT isn't a racer.

Some of its features, though, were designed with ISDE and enduro competition in mind. For example, when the riding gets really watery, the TT is well-prepared. The airbox is a side-access unit that draws most of its air from under the seat, and the filter element is seated on its roof, so even if the water does manage to find a way in, it's not likely to be drawn into the engine. The machine also has a quick-detach rear wheel just like that on the IT490. The only tools needed to fix a flat tire are tire irons and a 24mm wrench, and that's a feature playriders can appreciate as much as a serious enduro rider.

Still, the TT600 isn't the best motorcycle for weekenders. It isn't that they will be limited by the TT, it's just that there are other motorcycles that are lighter and have better suspension for less money.

It's with the thumper fringe element that the TT600 will most likely find a home, because despite its shortcomings, the TT is the best starting point on the four-stroke shelf. If you're planning to build the ultimate thumper, it stands to reason that you begin with the ultimate powerplant. And that powerplant is, without doubt, the TT600's. So, you see, it isn't what the TT is that makes it stand out. It's what the bike could be. •



Rear suspension is akin to the IT490's

But is out of its class on the 600.

Ride Review

• My playriding isn't as frenetic as an enduro or motocross, but I still figure that a proper playbike must be able to perform a full dirt repertoire.

And frankly, the TT600's repertoire is a bit short. Not because of its engine, though; that monster torquer can level any hill. Monumental powerslides are available with a mere twist of the wrist. And blasting up fireroads on the big TT is the definition of serious fun. But in slower going, the 600 demands considerable effort. Weight is the enemy of any kind of dirt riding, and horsing the TT over a tight trail convinces me that this thumper has gone over to the other side. I'd never fault that big, torquey engine, but for me, the TT is just too much work—and playriding is something I don't want to have to work at.

—Larry Works

• I've never been able to afford the sort of big-inch dirt thumper I really want. Sure, the bank manager would let me roll an XR or TT off the showroom floor, but he'd never spring for the extra goodies to make those play bikes serious.

But things have changed. Even my bank manager got excited when I told him about Yamaha's TT600. I assured him I wouldn't need extra cash for an engine kit or pipe because the stocker already has enough grunt to roost my dirt-riding friends. Even the stock swingarm is trickier than most aftermarket items. I admitted that I'd need a few extra bucks for stiffer springs and a reworked shock, but that still seemed cheap compared to every other thumper I'd asked for a loan on. My banker agrees; I could buy a lot of thumpers for the same price, but the TT600 is the only one I can afford. *—David Dewhurst*

• Every time I roll open the TT600's throttle, I marvel at its seemingly limitless powerband. There just is no combination of ground speed, engine rpm and gear selection that can prevent the bike from accelerating effortlessly.

But that's practically all I like about the 600. For me, the suspension is too soft, the steering too unpredictable and the bike too heavy. In 1976, back when the 271-pound TT500 revived the big-single concept, the manufacturers promised thumpers would be made lighter with each passing year, that the weight discrepancy between two-stroke and four-stroke dirtbikes would be narrowed. So where *are* those bikes? This 280-pounder certainly isn't one of them. And judging by other thumpers currently for sale, they still aren't in sight. *—Paul Dean*

Continued

CYCLE GUIDE SPECIFICATIONS

YAMAHA TT600K *trail*

IMPORTER: Yamaha Motor Corporation USA, 6555 Katella Avenue, Cypress, California 90630

SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE: $2269

ENGINE

Type . . . . . four-stroke vertical single
Valve arrangement . . . . . single overhead camshaft, four valves
Bore and stroke . . . . . 95.0mm x 84.0mm
Displacement 595.4cc
Compression ratio 8.5:1
Carburetion . . . . . one two-barrel Teikei Kikaki; 26mm slide/needle primary venturi, 27mm constant-vacuum secondary venturi
Air filter . . . . . dual-stage washable oiled foam element
Lubrication . . . . . dry sump
Starting system . . . . . primary kick
Ignition . . . . . flywheel-magneto CDI
Charging system . . . . . none; direct AC lighting

DRIVETRAIN

Primary drive . . . . . straight-cut gears; 2.387:1 ratio
Clutch . . . . . wet, multi-plate
Final drive . . . . . #520 O-ring chain (5/8-in. pitch, 1/4-in. width); 3.571:1 (50/14) ratio

Gear	Internal gear ratio	Overall gear ratio	MPH per 1000 RPM
I	2.308	19.674	3.98
II	1.588	13.540	5.78
III	1.200	10.230	7.65
IV	0.955	8.138	9.62
V	0.778	6.631	11.81

SUSPENSION/WHEEL TRAVEL

Front . . . . . Kayaba air-spring, 43mm stanchion tube diameter/ 11.7 in. (296mm)
Rear . . . . . single Yamaha shock, 20-position adjustable rebound damping, 25mm spring preload range/ 10.8 in. (273mm)

BRAKES

Front . . . . . drum, double-leading shoe
Rear . . . . . drum, single-leading shoe, rod-operated

TIRES

Front . . . . . 100/80-21 56M IRC Motocross Z Mark III
Rear . . . . . 150/80-18 IRC Motocross Z Mark III

DIMENSIONS AND CAPACITIES

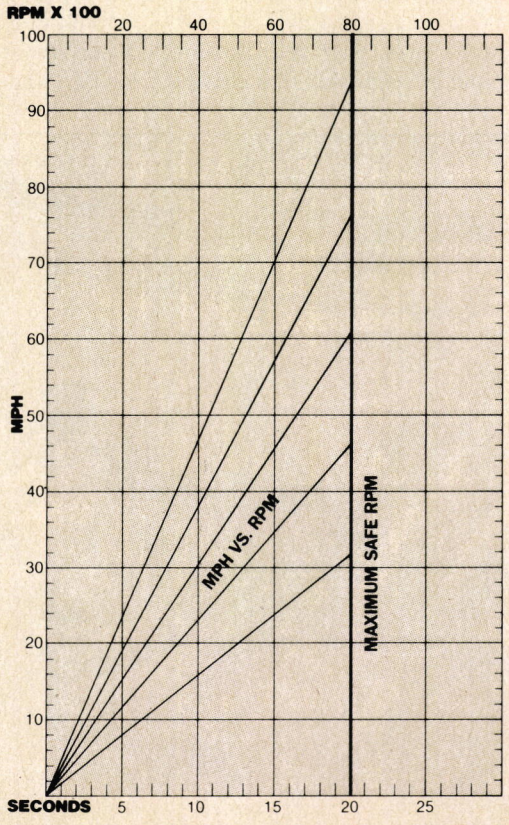
Weight . . . . . 280 lbs. (127.0kg)
Weight distribution . . . . . 45.0% front, 55.0% rear
Wheelbase . . . . . 57.9 to 58.6 in. (1471 to 1498mm)
Seat height . . . . . 37.0 in. (940mm)
Handlebar width . . . . . 31.9 in. (810mm)
Footpeg height . . . . . 17.1 in. (435mm)
Ground clearance . . . . . 12.0 in. (305mm), at skid rails
Steering head angle . . . . . 28.0 degrees from vertical
Front wheel trail . . . . . 4.65 in. (118mm)
Frame . . . . . tubular chromoly steel, single front downtube
Oil capacity . . . . . 2.5 qt. (2.4/)
Fuel tank . . . . . plastic, 3.3 gal. (12.5/), including 0.9 gal. (3.5/) reserve
Instrumentation . . . . . tripmeter resettable in tenths

PERFORMANCE

Top speed (observed) . . . . . 84 mph (135 km/h)

WARRANTY: 90 days

AVAILABLE COLOR: white only



All weights and measurements are taken with machine unladen and fuel tank empty

PRODUCT EVALUATION:

Perron Leathers' Mike Baldwin Formula One Roadracing Gloves

More than just dear skin.

• I never could understand why someone would pay a small fortune for tailor-made clothing. After all, off-the-rack items fit me just fine, and tailored garments seemed like needless frippery.

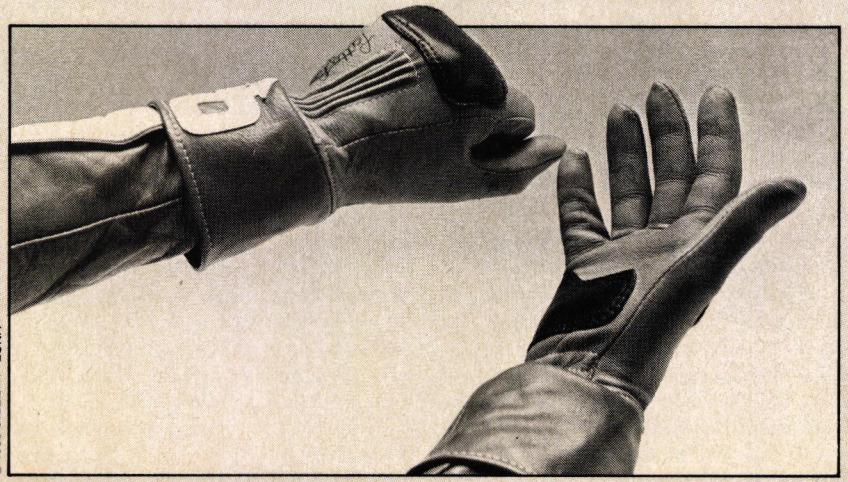
That is, until I got a pair of custom-made Mike Baldwin Formula One Roadracing Gloves from Perron Leathers. The Perrons' fit and feel make most other gloves seem cheap and crudely hewn by comparison. Part of the sumptuous feel is due to the buff-colored, 2-2½-ounce deerskin used for the body of the glove. That's fairly heavy for glove leather, but deerskin's inherent softness and elasticity make the Perrons exquisitely comfortable, while providing an extra measure of abrasion-resistance, too. And while all of the seams are single-stitched with 69-pound-test spun-nylon thread, there are no seams in the gloves' palms that might cause chafing or bunching.

A single layer of chrome-tanned, 2½-3-ounce cowhide covers the palms, though, for added protection. Cowhide is also used for the 3-inch-long gauntlets, Perron logos and on top of the ⅛-inch-thick polyurethane pads on the knuckles. The cowhide pieces can be ordered in any of 17 colors, and mixing them doesn't cost extra.

But it's the deerskin and the custom fit that gives the Perron gloves their high comfort-quotient. Out of the box, the gloves fit a bit tightly, but the deerskin soon stretches enough to conform to your hand, while a Spandex stretch-panel on the back helps retain the snug fit. There's Spandex around the gloves' wrists, as well, to seal out drafts. Not that air has much of a chance to seep in, though, because the gauntlets reach to mid-forearm. The Perrons are plenty durable, too; they survived a 40-mph-lowside, emerging only scuffed and with a pinhole in one fingertip. And while Perron Leathers' guarantee covers obvious defects, repairing crash-damaged gloves costs extra.

The Perron gloves' degree of comfort and protection doesn't come cheap, however. They carry a suggested retail price of $65 a pair (or $32.50 for one, if you need a replacement), which approaches a small fortune for gloves. That might seem like needless frippery to some people, although not to me. Custom-made clothes still don't make much sense to me, but custom-made gloves do. And mine will come from Perron.

To get order forms and swatches of Perron's available cowhide-colors, write Perron Leathers, Dept. CG, 2 Highland Ave., Northfield, Massachusetts 01360, or call (413) 498-2268.—*Charles Everitt*



© 1983 GILBERT LUNA

Perron gloves use supple deerskin for comfort and cowhide for protection

But it's their custom-fit—and their price—that sets them apart.

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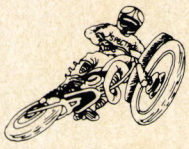
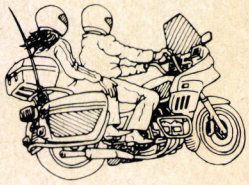


For 2 Wheels or 3

For 2 Stroke or 4



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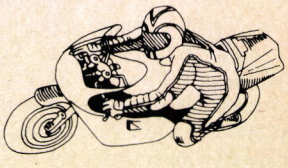

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MINITEST:

Honda ATC200X

The two-wheeler's three-wheeler.

• Honda's ATC200X just might become the hussy of the ATC world, because it's plain that this machine believes in playing the field. Sure, the 200 is a bona fide ATV, but when it's not performing its assigned three-wheel duties on campgrounds and in dirt fields, it's busy flirting with just about every dirt-going recreation group around—especially motorcyclists.

For a while, at least, few dirtbikers will be lured by the 200. Motorcyclists usually have well-rehearsed excuses for not even *trying* three-wheelers. ATVs always were at one extreme or the other; either slow and bouncy or, in the case of the Honda ATC250R, single-purpose racing machines aimed at hardcore three-wheel enthusiasts.

But now those excuses are about as airtight as a broken Jofa, because the 200X is a middle-ground machine that has learned to turn tricks for three- *and* two-wheel crowds. For example, the 200 has a manual clutch. As trivial as that detail might sound, it's an important factor in the machine's appeal to motorcyclists because it gives riding the ATC more of a motorcycle-like feel. The manual clutch also caters to serious ATV-racers and, best of all, it doesn't make life that much more difficult for the beginner. The 200 has so much low-end torque that it's hard to stall, so even a brand-new rider won't wish for a centrifugal clutch after a little practice.

And it's no wonder that the 200X pulls so well. Its engine was derived from one of the torquiest small-bore enduro powerplants around—the XR200R's. Most of the ATC's top end is identical to that of its motorcycle counterpart. The biggest differences are shorter cam-duration, a kickstarter mechanism that rotates forward so the lever doesn't hit the right rear wheel, and the transmission. The ATC's five gear ratios are the same as the motorcycle's lower five, although the three-wheeler has no sixth gear and has taller final gearing.

In order to get even more low-end power than the XR has, the ATC's Keihin carburetor has a 24mm venturi rather than the XR's 26mm, and the compression ratio is slightly lower. That also means the three-wheeler doesn't have the top-end power of the XR—a bike that was never known for peak horsepower in the first place. But chances are you won't miss that power unless you plan on dragracing motorcycles. Besides, most of the 200's muscle actually reaches the ground because the machine has suspension—not just balloon tires, but a real shock and fork. In the rear, a single Showa shock connects to the swingarm without the usual linkage found on most off-road motorcycles; but the shock's radical laid-down mounting gives the rear wheels rising rates of springing and damping, anyway. Effectively, that means the bigger the bump, the stiffer the suspension. The shock also has four compression-damping settings, and where the whoops are large and closely spaced, we found it best to use the No. 4 (hardest) setting. For most low-speed tricks, though, the standard (No. 2) setting was sufficient to handle bump-buffing duties.

Either way, the suspension makes a big difference in the way the 200X handles rough terrain. You don't have to chop the throttle and hit the brakes when you see a mild section of bumps approaching. Instead of breaking into a balloon-tire bounce like

on an unsuspended three-wheeler, the 200X can handle the whoops with ease. You simply gas it and lift the front end, just like you would on a motorcycle.

But just because the 200X uses some motorcycle parts and has suspension, don't get the idea that this is simply a motorcycle with a spare tire. This machine is a purebred three-wheeler, and it exhibits all the habits that put three-wheelers in a class by themselves. For example, hitting gullies and bumps at any angle other than 90 degrees is doing it the hard way. You have to approach bumps so that the rear wheels hit at the same time to keep from hopping the 200 sideways. If just one wheel receives an impact, both wheels compress (the suspension isn't independent because Honda feels the ATC's cornering ability would be adversely affected) and the machine takes a sharp tilt. When you can't hit a whoop dead-straight-on, the trick is to keep your legs bowed so you can shift your weight quickly enough to keep the Honda flying on a straight course.

Motorcycle riders will also have to remember that ATVs have an appetite for feet. If you take your feet off the pegs in a turn, you'll be not-so-gently reminded that you goofed up as you run over yourself. Cornering is a feet-up proposition; it just requires a sharp weight-shift to the inside of a turn—similar to hanging off of a streetbike—and a blip of the throttle.

That throttle, incidentally, still is the same thumb-operated mechanism used on every ATC since 1971. Honda claims that beginners are less likely to open this kind of throttle control unintentionally. Another rationale comes from the northern areas of the country, where ATCs are used in the snow. When ice gets between a twist-grip and the handlebar, it's possible for the throttle to seize-up. Whatever the reasoning behind the thumb control, though, some riders will find it awkward, because when you lean forward, your thumb will have to stretch to reach the control. It's usually easier just to reach all the way around the handlebar and use your forefinger to open the throttle.

These are adjustments that a motorcycle rider will have to make if he gives *any* three-wheeler a try. The 200X just makes most of these adjustments easier with its suspension and its engine's enduro-bike heritage. Hardened ATV-enthusiasts won't have any trouble in accepting the 200X, either. In fact, the machine stands an excellent chance of dominating the 200 class at races in the same fashion the 250R does in its class. Even weekenders have a stake in this ATC because of its unstoppable low-end torque. And suspension means just as much to the play crowd as it does to racers and dirtbikers.

All of this combines to make the 200X a decidedly easy ATC to get along with. And in this case, being easy can lead to an extremely *good* reputation. —*Ron Lawson*

HONDA ATC200X

Importer: American Honda Motor Company Inc.
100 West Alondra Boulevard
Gardena, California 90247

Category	three-wheeled all-terrain vehicle
Suggested retail price	$1698
Engine type	four-stroke vertical single
Valve arrangement	single overhead camshaft
Bore and stroke	65.0mm x 57.8mm
Displacement	191.8cc
Compression ratio	9.6:1
Carburetion	one 24mm Keihin slide/needle
Starting system	primary kick
Gearbox	5-speed
Front fork/wheel travel	Showa, 33mm stanchion tube diameter/7.2 in. (183mm)
Rear shocks/wheel travel	single Showa shock, 4-position adjustable rebound damping, 28mm spring preload range/6.2 in. (157mm)
Wheelbase	47.4 to 48.0 in. (1204 to 1219mm)
Seat height	29.1 in. (740mm)
Weight	285 lbs. (129.3kg)
Top speed (observed)	53 mph (85 km/h)
Warranty	90 days
Available color	red only

Honda's ATC200X is the offspring of an intermarriage between an ATC and XR200R

So it's a three-wheeler that can learn a few motorcycle tricks.

Sand-blasting is a natural pastime with any All-Terrain Vehicle

But the suspended ATC200X likes its fun served a little on the rough side, too.

PHOTOGRAPHY © 1983 DAVID DEWHURST

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SPORT LINES

Cycle Guide's True Tales of Race Courses, Dark Horses and Machines at Speed

EDITED BY DAIN GINGERELLI

Hat Wars

The sponsor strikes back.

• At every racetrack, there's a small bit of real estate that's a valuable piece of property. It's victory circle, and its value stems not from the prize money the racers win but from the post-race media coverage that plot of ground attracts for the sponsors. That's so because after a race, victory circle is jammed with television, magazine and newspaper reporters.

And the most prominent victory-circle display for a sponsor's logo are hats. Whenever a picture is snapped, or the film rolls, the racer's face is the focal point. And since the viewer is looking at the racer's face, he has only to scan upward to see the hat logo, too. Because of this, sponsors vie to get their hats in this ring and on the riders' heads. It's a battle fought as hard as the race just won. This is the Hat War and, as one sponsor's representative put it, "It's more important than the race itself."

The Hat War is more than just a game. Joe Rich, manager of motorcycle tire sales for Dunlop Tire Company calls it "racing's commercial payback for involvement in the event." It's a chance for sponsor recognition. And considering the stakes involved, it's understandable that practically every sponsor likes to play by his own rules. For instance, one company's representative likes to saturate victory circle with his trunk-

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110/90 x 19	55.50
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K291T REAR	**OUR PRICE**
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Wayne Rainey in victory circle—Let the Good Times Roll

Hat-War Rule No. 1—No wimps allowed in victory circle.

load of hats, even offering them to some of the race officials. "A way to share the wealth," as he put it.

R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company, sponsor of the Camel Pro Series, tries to keep order in this potentially chaotic situation, allowing hats from the riders' sponsors into the ring as frequently as possible. Rick Hauser, team manager for the Camel Pro Series, says that when more than one sponsor is involved—as is often the case—Camel will give "everyone a fair shot." But, he adds, "Rider's personal sponsors come first." With that out of the way, other race sponsors, including Camel Cigarettes, can toss their hats in the ring for photos. But Camel's attitude isn't totally benevolent because, as Hauser explains, "We usually have signs or banners in the background at victory circle, so it's not that important to get our hats on the riders."

Things aren't as easygoing at Supercross races, though. With three major sponsors in the series—Wrangler Wear, Miller High Life Beer and Honda—victory circle used to be hectic after a race. "It used to be a free-for-all," said one Supercross spokesperson. But Wrangler, Miller and Honda got together before this season and developed a formula.

The Supercross peace coalition worked out this plan: Any rider winning a race on a Honda wears a Honda hat. The second-place rider wears a Miller hat, while third gets a Wrangler cap. If the winner isn't on a Honda, then he gets a Miller cap, and second and third wear Wrangler. It's Henry Kissinger-complicated, yet effective. But after all first-round photos are snapped, anything goes, with the riders exchanging hats for round two. "Sometimes we have three or four different victory circle photos," said one Supercross official.

And as in any warfare, there are special tactics used to gain an advantage. Dunlop likes to give personalized hats to the riders likely to show up in victory circle. As Rich explains it, "A guy tends to hold onto his own hat, and we get more exposure that way. When we gave Kenny Roberts his own hat with his name—and Dunlop's—in gold lettering, he wore it everywhere." Pretty soon everyone wanted a black-and-gold Dunlop hat like the one Roberts wore. Dunlop even began issuing them, but without The King's name on the side.

Still, the bottom line in the Hat War is the same as the bottom line in any war: Those who fight the hardest stand the best chance of winning. "Exposure," said one hat-fighter, "is in direct proportion to the amount of hats you put out there." It's tenacious fighting, almost to the point of being ludicrous. But everyone takes it seriously. As Rich said, "If there wasn't so much money involved, people would probably laugh at it." —*Dain Gingerelli*

© 1983 DOZIER MOBLEY

Mike Baldwin holds his trophy

The sponsor's trophy is above the bill.

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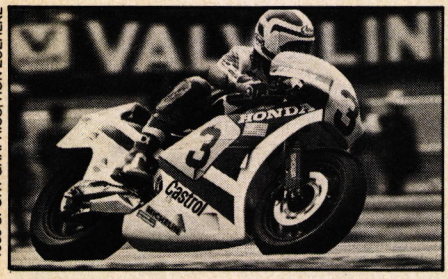
Danny Magoo Chandler after Carlsbad win

His hat's off to the champagne.



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Fast Freddie on the Honda NS500F

Good things come in threes.

Three's Company

Yanks in Europe.

• Freddie Spencer is the man in charge this year on the world Grand Prix circuit. He's won the first three GPs of the season and, by virtue of his fourth-place finish in Germany and then another win at the Spanish GP, extended a six-point series lead over second-place Kenny Roberts, 68 to 62. Only Roberts, on his Yamaha OW70 vee-four, has managed to break Spencer's winning streak, by taking the German and Austrian GPs.

With the season just about half over, it looks as though America is going to have a 500cc world champion again. And third in this points battle is yet *another* American, Randy Mamola, with 39 points. But while Roberts and Fast Freddie have had top equipment, Mamola has been hampered with what might be termed insufficient funds in his Suzuki's cylinder bank. As one insider put it, "Suzuki thought they were ready for this year. They've won the title the past two years, and thought the square-four had enough horsepower to beat the Hondas and Yamahas again. They were wrong." So while Mamola and defending world champion Franco Uncini have been struggling on their RG500-based racers, Suzuki engineers have been busy developing a new engine. Some predict a vee-four.

But it appears to be too late for Mamola, or the rest of the GP squad, to catch up. The shootout is between Spencer and Roberts, and with six points in hand, Spencer is calling the shots. As Roberts said following his German GP win, it would take a DNF by Spencer to even things up, which is exactly what happened at Austria.

But Honda and Fast Freddie aren't planning on that to become a habit. As Spencer pointed out after GP win number three in Italy, two of his collegues—Barry Sheene and Roberts—each started two of their championship seasons the same way, winning the initial three events. Spencer intends to maintain that tradition.

—Dain Gingerelli

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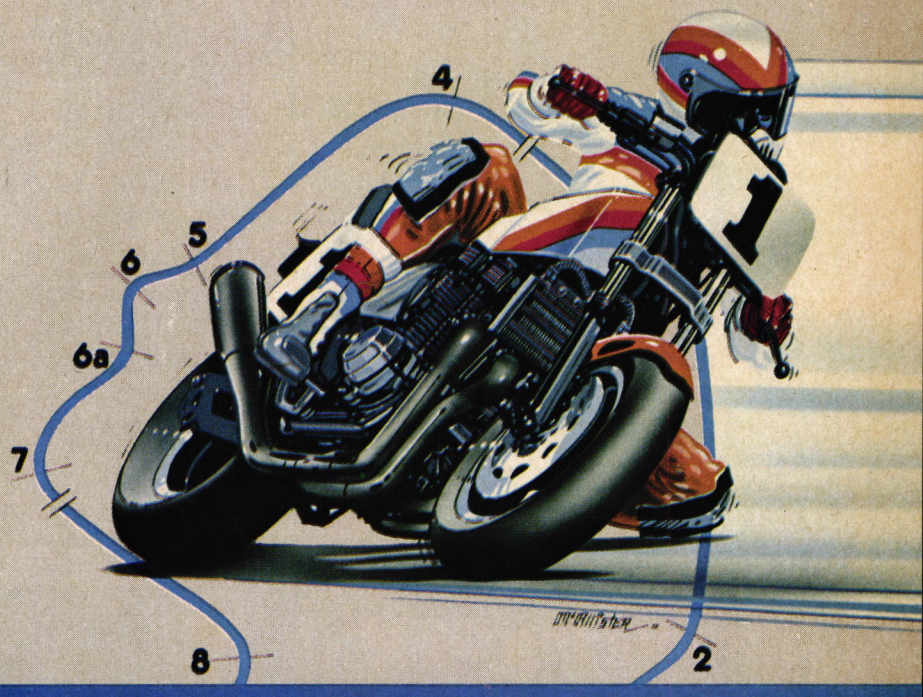

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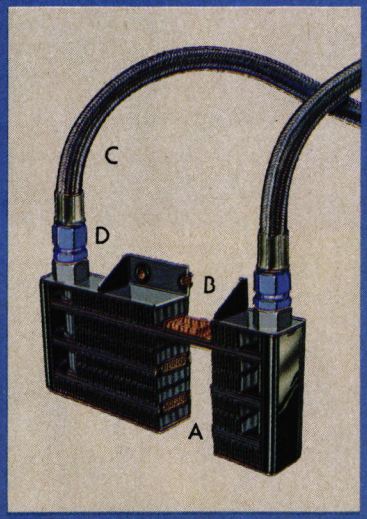

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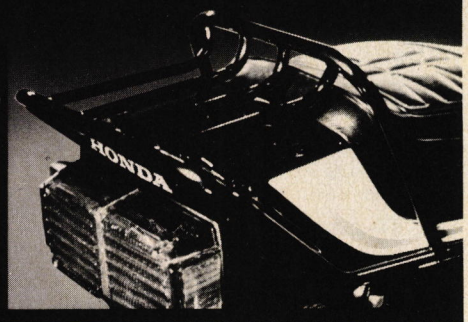

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TRIALS:

America on Trial

The verdict rests with the spectators.

PHOTOGRAPHY© 1983 LEN WEED

Kurt Comer wheelies over a rock

Addressing the issue with power.

• There were grumblings in the pits following the American round of the World Observed Trials Championship, held in Texas last April. Most of the riders complained the 10-mile, two-loop course was too *easy*.

That was in sharp contrast to their comments following last year's Rocky Sierra Trials, in which none of the riders could do anything right. Even winner Eddy Lejeune accumulated 113 points there. But the 1983 event was a cakewalk for winner John Lampkin. In fact, the top seven finishers completed the 42 sections with no more than 47 points lost per rider.

It was no fluke that they finished so well. The dual-sanctioning body for the Wagner Cup (the North American Trials Council and the AMA) took a conservative approach to laying out this year's course. The winner, it was predicted before the event, would probably accumulate one point per section; Lampkin's total of 38 was only four shy of the forecast.

But as much as the riders complain about really torturous courses like Rocky Sierra, they don't enjoy competing on predictable courses, either. They claim it not only makes for unspectacular riding, it disappoints the spectators, as well. Easy courses, they say, don't call for much trick-riding, so the spectators miss seeing riding stunts like bunny-hop turns or wheelies up a boulder face.

More to the point, the tough courses are what separate the world-class riders from the field-fillers. And they make for a more interesting show, too, something the American organizers should consider if they hope to popularize trials in this country. After all, trick-riding helped promote Supercross, and everyone knows how successful that is. It should work for the plonkers, too.

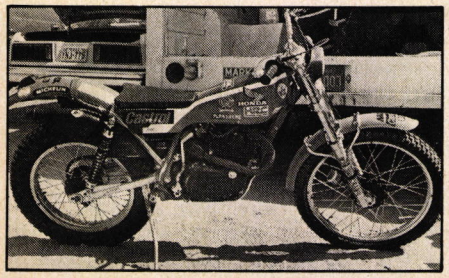
—Dain Gingerelli

This year's U.S. trials was too easy

Leaving little room for stunts.

Some riders managed to make mistakes

This entrant got the point.



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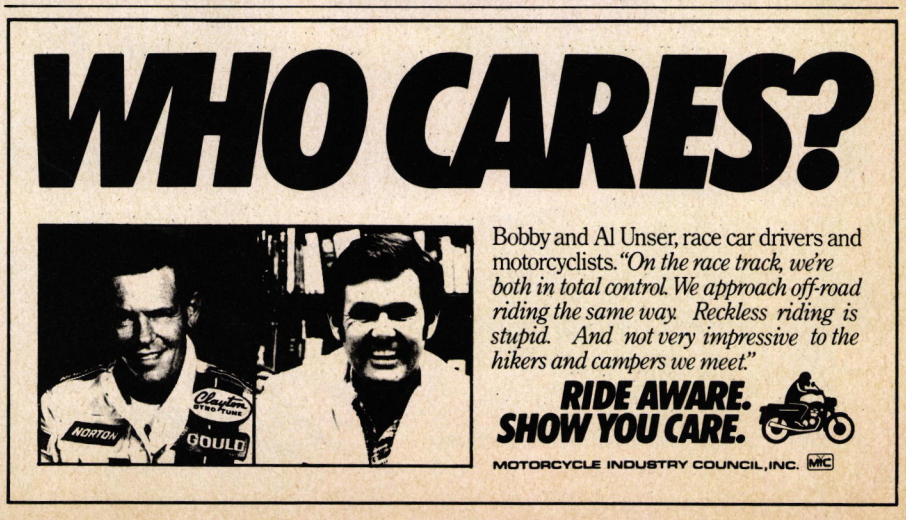
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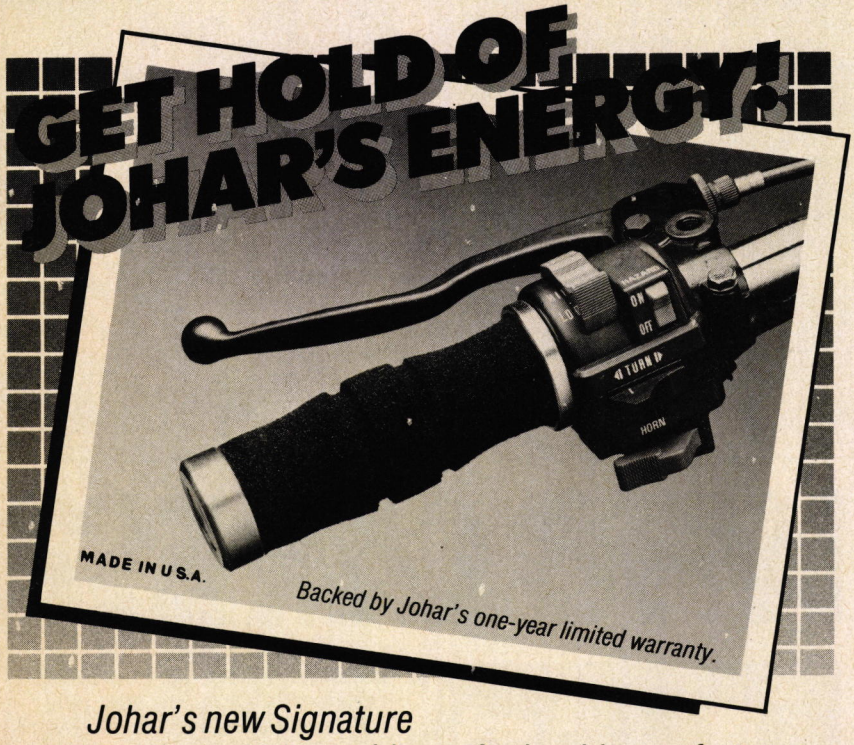

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TRIALS:
An Age-Old Feeling

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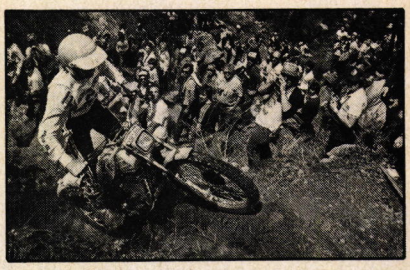


Bernie Schrieber makes a clean pass

'24 years old, and going strong.

• Trials riding is not a particularly dangerous sport; most trials-related injuries are not as serious as those incurred in motocross or roadracing, for instance. So, taking that into account, you might think a good, experienced rider could compete in world-class events until he's ready for the rocking chair.

Not so. In fact, by age 30 most world-class riders are considered over the hill. Three-time world champion Yrjo Vesterinen, at 31, hasn't won a World Cup event in years. The "fast guys" in World Cup trials are Eddy Lejeune (21), America's former world champion Bernie Schrieber (24) and Gilles Burgat (21). The trend is obvious: Younger riders are dominating trials, a sport once considered to be the final bastion of motorcycle competition in which age wasn't a factor.

Schrieber feels that specialization is transforming trials into a young man's sport. "Intensive practice *everyday*," says Schrieber, is what it takes to win in world competition. And it's that intensity, he says, that is most responsible for the disappearance of older riders in the World Cup.

Schrieber and other top competitors agree that, possibly, even before a rider's reflexes slow down, his mental attitudes can give out. "You get burned-out from the necessary year-round training," Schrieber said. "These 18-year-old kids are anxious, just like I was then (at age 18). They're only interested in one thing—riding. If you're 28, you have other interests outside of riding trials."

Schrieber figures that, at the most, he is good for another four years in the sport. By then there should be someone a little younger and a little bolder with only one thing on his mind—riding trials.

—Len Weed

Pit Bits

PHOTOGRAPHY© 1983 TOM RILES

Glover and Hannah square off in a wheel-to-wheel duel

There's no love lost between the two, now that they're on different teams.

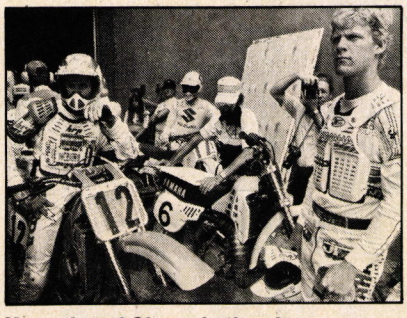
• Hannah vs. Glover: Last year Bob Hannah and Broc Glover were teammates. Now they're bitter enemies. Their newfound feud has come to a boil on the racetrack, too, as evidenced at the Pontiac Supercross. While dicing for the lead, the former friends banged handlebars more than once, with Hannah even shaking his fist at Glover during one bout. But while Hannah manually expressed his emotions, Glover grabbed the opportunity to twist his Yamaha's throttle, and seize the lead. In the end, though, Hannah and his Honda still won the race.

• No White Hats Here: In an effort to separate himself from Hannah, Glover had "The Good Guys" inscribed on the seat of his racing leathers. As for Hannah, he's been reincarnated as "Hurricane II" since going red.

• AMA is Yamahappy: The AMA and Yamaha finally have settled their lawsuit stemming from last fall's boycott of the Trans-USA series. Details of the settlement were not fully disclosed, but it was announced that Yamaha will now officially recognize the AMA's format for professional motocross racing.

• In The Shadow of the XR750: Honda debuted its new RS750 flattrack racer at the Ascot Half-Mile last May. As rumored in Pit Bits last November, the engine is an air-cooled vee-twin, based on the Shadow VT750 street model. Terry Poovey qualified the bike for the program, but couldn't get beyond the Last Chance Qualifier, where he finished last. But two weeks later at the Springfield Mile, Hank Scott gave the new bike a third-place finish.

• Safety First: Bill Huth, owner of Wil-



Hannah and Glover in the pits

It's all smiles for the cameras.

Continued

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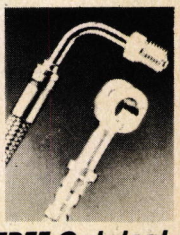

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The leathers say it all

A tale of two tails.

low Springs Raceway, recently was presented a special award by the Jon Woo Memorial Safety Foundation. The award was in recognition of the track's continuous improvements in rider and spectator safety. The Jon Woo Safety Foundation was established by former AMA roadracer Bruce Hammer to foster and improve racetrack safety.

• Viva Las Vegas: A desert-race classic is returning to Southern California. The legendary Barstow-to-Vegas race has been given the go-ahead by the Bureau of Land Management, the same government agency that, with the support of conservation groups, banned the race in 1975, claiming the 3,000-rider event was endangering desert wildlife. But after reconsidering evidence presented by enthusiast groups such as the AMA, the event has been reinstated on a limited basis. Only 1,200 riders will be allowed to start, and the course can't deviate from the original race route.

• Rumor: There's plenty of speculation about what Kenny Roberts will do if he retires after this season, and one rumor has him heading a Superbike team for

Yamaha next year. But don't look for the Modesto cowboy to wear his horsehide at the track; he'll only manage the team—at least that's the story according to the rumor.

• Greener Pastures: While the promoters of the Superbowl of Motocross never promised a rose garden for this year's race at the Rose Bowl, they are considering giving the track a *grass surface*. According to Stadium Motorsports officials, the grass would be planted on the indoor course by a hydroponic seeding process. It would be the first time an indoor motocross course had a grass surface.

• Superbowl Double-Ender: Further news about the Rose Bowl track indicates the course will extend about 50 rows into the spectator seating area at both ends of the stadium. And to make the racing interesting, there will be a Miller Challenge award to the winner: $5,000 will be tacked onto the regular pay-out for first place.

• California Stage Fright: While Bob Hannah is certainly the winningest motocross racer in AMA history, he hasn't fared too well on California Supercross tracks. The Hurricane has never won the Superbowl of Motocross, nor, for that matter, has he won any event where there was a crowd larger than 40,000.

• OCIR, Over and Out: 1983 could be the final year of operation for Orange County International Raceway. As of January 1, 1984, the timing lights will be switched off, and the racing facility will be replaced by commercial buildings and housing projects. OCIR was the only remaining major dragstrip in Southern California, once the home for such famous facilities as Lions and Irwindale. However, Carlsbad and Antelope raceways still schedule events, but neither track ever reached the grand scale of The Big Three.

• Arizona Raceways: On the other side of the Colorado River, Arizona is expanding its potential to become the racing capitol of the West. A group of investors, headed by Orange County International Raceway president Charlie Allen, recently broke ground for a new racing facility near Phoenix. The complex will accommodate oval racing, dragracing, motocross, speedway, offroad and roadracing.

• Quote Department: Bo O'Brochta has spent most of his professional dragracing career on Top Fuelers and nitroburning motorcycles. O'Brochta recently switched to a turbocharged Funny Bike, and when asked what it's like to ride, he replied: "It's just like riding a two-stroke." —*Dain Gingerelli*

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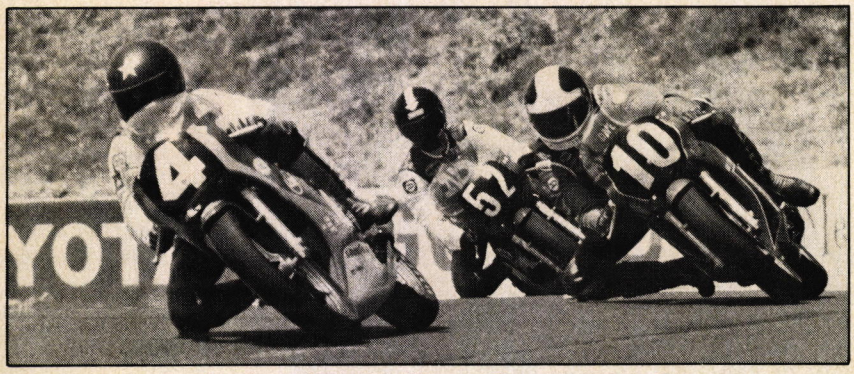

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Hugh Humble, Dave Emde and Tracy DeMuro at Riverside's Turn Six

At stake was a steak dinner, not to mention privateer's honor.

• Real Racers don't have factory contracts, or the luxuries that go with them. Real Racers are privateers, the backbone of racing. They pay their own bills and, with help from friends, do their own mechanical work, too.

Racing rules these shoestring-riders' lives, in some cases down to such specifics as determining their diets; money spent for luxuries such as well-balanced meals could starve the bike of necessary horsepower for the *race*.

Consequently, Real Racers share the same basic menu of baloney sandwiches and generic-brand soda pop. It's a way to cut corners, especially when there's a full season of racing coming up. And for some racers, such as Californians Dave Emde and Tracy DeMuro, the season begins in March with a 2,500-mile coast-to-coast trip to Daytona Beach, Florida for Speed Week.

Emde and DeMuro compete in the Formula 2 class and, along with their respective tuners/bike-owners Bob Endicott and John Lassak, pay their own racing bills. But for this year's Daytona, things would be different; each had managed to eke out some money from outside sources.

Emde went fishing for sponsorship, dangling his two F2 wins in 1982 as bait; Nippondenso Spark Plugs bit. But part of the deal involved Emde and Endicott transporting a van-full of sparkplugs to Daytona for ND's Speed Week contingency program.

DeMuro's Daytona deal was based on speculation, however, something Real Racers often do. He reckoned that since he finished eighth at Laguna Seca last summer on an overweight, twin-shock, RD400F-powered F2 bike that he and Lassak had built from scratch, his 1983 Daytona debut on a TZ250G with the RD engine should be spectactular. Cus-

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tom-seat manufacturer Hang Two joined the program, lining DeMuro's thin wallet with unfamiliar greenbacks.

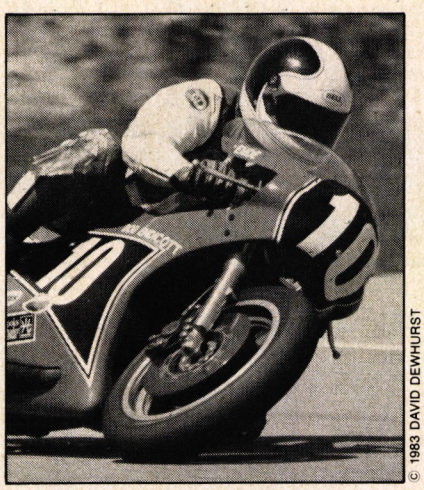
But by the end of Speed Week, both DeMuro and Emde had incurred problems even money couldn't cure. Emde and Endicott couldn't get their TZ250H properly geared to tame the tricky winds and steep, high-speed bowl of Daytona Speedway. And as for DeMuro's California Hot-Rod, apparently the RD engine didn't like the East Coast air and failed to dazzle the TZs with its top speed, as it had at Laguna Seca.

Things got even worse for DeMuro. During the final practice session prior to the F2 main on Saturday, the RD's right-side crank seal failed, bathing the bike in transmission oil. And without an army of mechanics to do the work—something most factory riders enjoy—Lassak and DeMuro removed and replaced the engine and its defective seal themselves with less than an hour remaining before the race. That NASCAR-quick engine change had its price, though; the left exhaust's gasket wasn't properly seated, and the resulting air-leak caused the motor to seize while DeMuro was running in 11th place.

Emde did a little better, though, by finishing 16th. And at Talledega the following week, he won, beating Hugh Humble—another baloney connoisseur—by inches.

As for DeMuro and Lassak, they were halfway to California when Emde got the checkered flag at Talledega. The race had been postponed a day, and Lassak had already taken too much time from his plumbing business at home.

Things got better—one month, 5,000 miles and couple of thousand dollars later—for them the Riverside Pro/Am. Since Riverside is their home track,



© 1983 DAVID DEWHURST

Dave Emde on Bob Endicott's TZ250H

Privateers: The backbone of racing.

DeMuro and Lassak were confident of doing well. And they were right; during his 10-lap qualifying heat DeMuro pestered the TZs of Humble and Emde, finally taking third place.

In the main, the California Hot-Rod finished fifth, going the distance with the front-runners. Emde had his hands full, too, and got nipped at the line by Randy Renfrow, an East Coast privateer, and fellow-Californian Danny Coe.

As tuners Endicott and Lassak returned to the pits after the race, Endicott said to Lassak, "Well, you're at the big-time now," referring to the Hot-Rod's in-the-money finish. Lassak, whose stomach was still rolling from the punches of his baloney breakfast, wasn't so sure he liked the trail that led to the big-time. But by dinner he'd found the good-times-racer-mood again. After all, DeMuro had just won the luxury of a well-balanced meal—at least until their next race. —*Dain Gingerelli*

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Lassak, DeMuro and the California Hot-Rod on the grid

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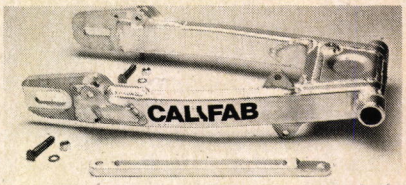

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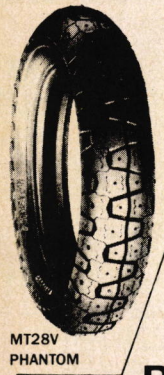

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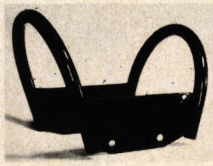

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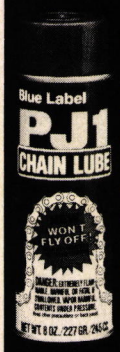

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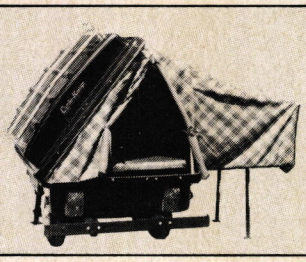

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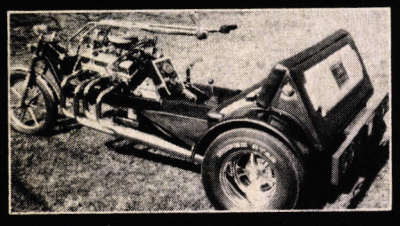

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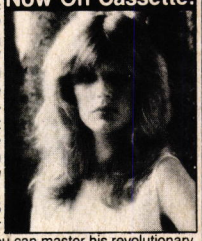

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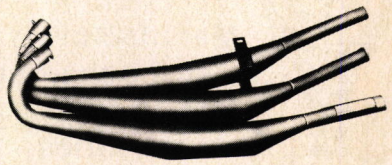

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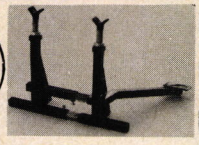

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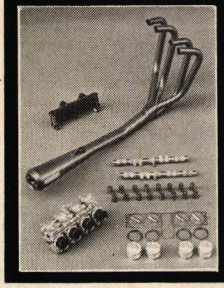

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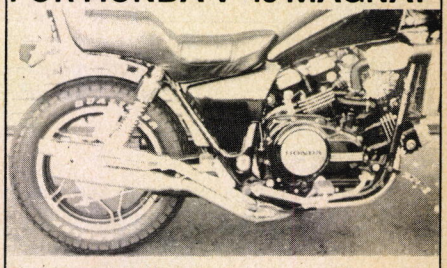

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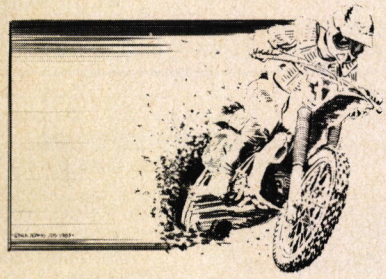

that is tested, I would be in a real fix. How can I be sure that the test results you people are giving me are correct?

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T.J. Rafferty's column in the May issue (Adventures) hit the nail right on the head. Well, almost on the head; I would have chosen another bike for the trip, a Yamaha XT500. In fact, I did. The XT, my faithful XT, is what I consider to be the Ultimate Touring Bike.

And that XT and I have been on some ultimate tours together, too. Back and forth across Canada so many times I can't remember, and even down the West Coast to Mexico and back, all without any major problems. For me, two-wheeled touring on a thumper is the ultimate high. Being out in the fresh air, experiencing new vistas, is the only drug I'll ever need. Nothing can duplicate the feel of a low-revving, 500cc single. It's the closest thing to a horse man has ever created. Besides, cruising a gravel road at 50 mph sure beats the monotony of the highway.

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And unlike the horse, your thumper won't throw a shoe on that gravel road—ed.

TIME CHECK

If you'll pardon the expression, now wait just a minute here. Your answer to the letter in the May issue concerning motorcycle dashboard displays (Kicked Off) has got me ticking. All right, I'll agree that my Sabre has some pretty useless gauges on its video-board, the digital tripmeter and the stopwatch to name two. And I'll admit that the LCD fuel gauge leaves something to be desired, since it shows full until the bike is nearly empty, waiting to give the bad news all at once.

But then there's the clock. Some of us like to know what time it is without having to pull up a sleeve to find out. And with all its excesses and faults my Sabre's video-board has this feature. I like my clock.

Daniel Lewis
Edwards AFB, California

Actually, we're with you, Lewis. We like a quick-glance time fix, too—ed.

HAPPY SNAPS

I'd like to know how you did the photography for the cover of the June issue. I mean, how was that picture made? The background looks real, and the color and clarity of the GS550E are excellent, but the bike doesn't seem to match the background. I enjoy taking pictures of motorcycles and I'd like to know how you did this one.

Joe Bartrand
Riverside, California

Start by taking at least two photographs. Get the picture?—ed.

TRAVEL SERVICES

I'm planning a motorcycle trip to the East Coast. Could you send me some information on how to get there? Would it be better to go through the U.S. or to go through Canada? I live in Michigan.

James McCrea
Davison, Michigan

The decision is all your's, McCrea. Some people even do it on gravel roads with a thumper—ed.

ROLL OUT THE TWIN

In October of '81 CYCLE GUIDE had an article on a twin-turbo GS1100. The results of that prototype turbo setup were, to say the least, remarkable. In the article it was stated a followup would be forthcoming; well, a year has passed and no sign of a further test. How about some more information on the final outcome.

Also, I have written several times to RB Racing, requesting information about the twin-turbo, and as yet have never received an answer. Is RB Racing still around? Is the twin-turbo still in development, or is it ready to market?

Any information would be appreciated; I'd like to fit a twin-turbo on my latest bike, a GS1100 Katana.

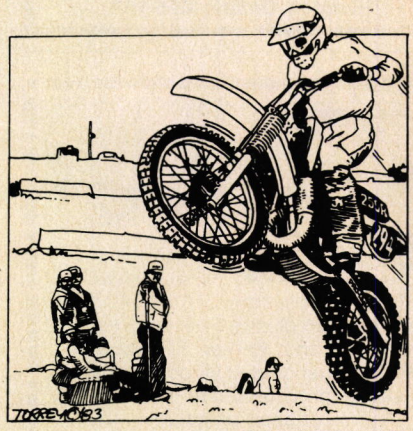
John Webster
Halifax, Nova Scotia

Our Twin-Turbo Suzuki is resting right now, but you can get yours in about two months; RB Racing is, indeed, alive and well—ed.

WHY HIDE IT

Let me start off by saying that I'm a Suzuki man. I believe that Suzuki products are tops, bar none. But Suzuki's advertising and public relations are just plain awful.

Just look at CYCLE GUIDE, June '82. On pages 60 and 61 there is a two-page, full-color Suzuki ad, offering custom Star helmets with the purchase of either a GS1100E or a GS550M. Both bikes are shown in the ad. Now compare these pic-



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tures to the one-page photo on page 76, an ad for Supertrapp.

The Supertrapp ad shows the GS1100E to much better advantage and makes the bike *look* like the exciting machine it is. And it's just an ad for a damn muffler.

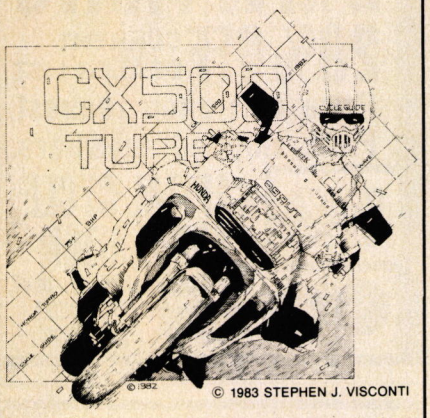
Aaron Marcus
Santa Barbara, California

But an exciting muffler—ed.

WILDLIFE ADVENTURES

T.J. Rafferty's run-in with the Animal Society for Promoting Cruelty to Motorcyclists (June '83) isn't the kind of thing that would make someone an instant hit in a benchracing session. But this is exactly the kind of word-of-mouth experience new riders can't get enough of. Keep those war stories coming, and use steady thumb-pressure on the horn but-

LETTERS



ton when next you surprise a nursing possum in the middle of your favorite sweeper. It makes them scurry in a hurry.

Paul Bender
Larchmont, New York

Just make sure that they scurry in the opposite direction that you hurry—ed.

ONE FOR WORKS

Larry Works' editorial, "How Do You Spell Relief?" (June '83), offered the most succinct summary of Harley-Davidson's petition to the International Trade Commission, and the ramifications of that petition, that I've seen. It was extremely gratifying to read exactly what I had thought about the whole deal. I just hope important people at Harley-Davidson read what Mr. Works has written.

Robert Gobetz
Jackson, Wyoming

You bet they have. Their response is in this issue—ed.

STRING HIM UP

In regards to the June editorial, let me make two comments:

Number 1/ Fire the pompous jerk who wrote it.

Number 2/ Keep him away from a typewriter or a motorcycle.

C.L. Robbins
Bloomington, Illinois

And people say our readers are all the same—ed.

A STAR IS BORN

Regarding the article by Dain Gingerelli in the June '83 issue, "Harley-Davidson Hogs the BOTT Show ": This article contains the first reference I have seen to a BOTT show. Would you please tell me what it is?

George Bott
Wilton, Connecticut

Of course. It's a high-speed slalom run through a series of your reflectorized highway markers, George—ed. •

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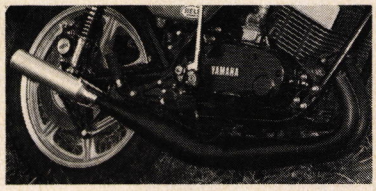

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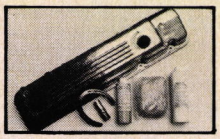

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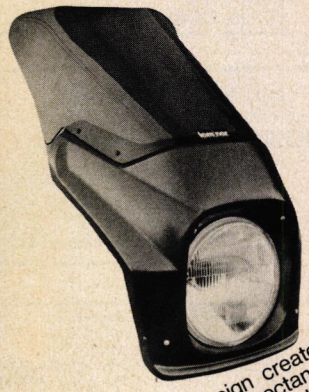

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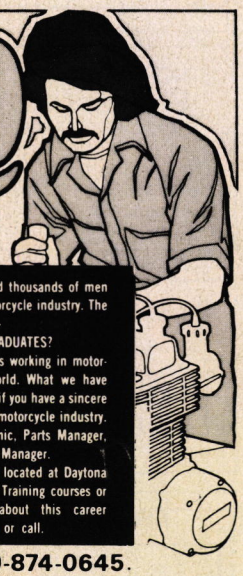

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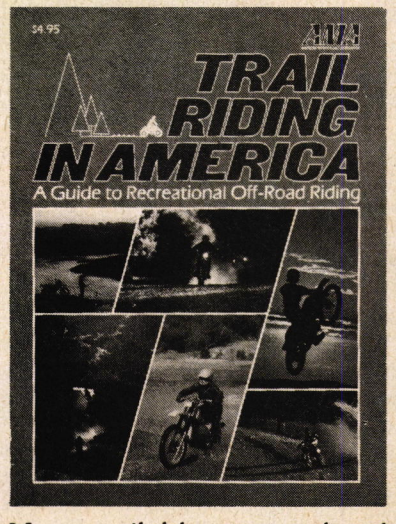

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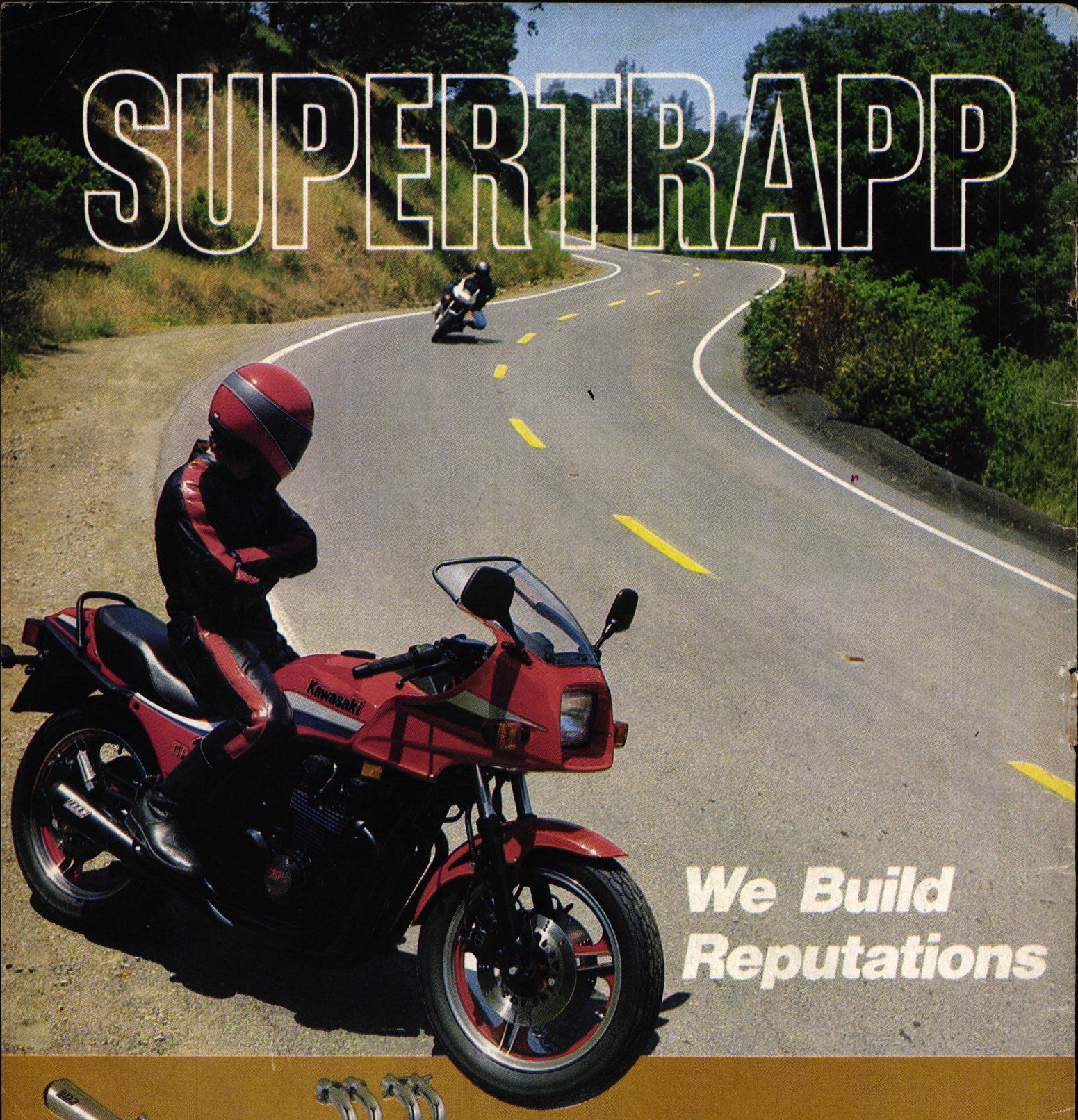

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